

THE WORLD OF
RENAISSANCE ITALY



JOSEPH P. BYRNE

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ARTS TO FOOD
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The World of Renaissance Italy

A Daily Life Encyclopedia

Joseph P. Byrne



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Preface

The World of Renaissance Italy: A Daily Life Encyclopedia is one in a series of encyclopedias that is meant to expand the reader's understanding of the ways in which life was experienced by the people of a particular time and place. The Renaissance is a label used for a cultural phenomenon that followed what historians have called the Middle Ages and that opened the early modern period of European history. For purposes of this work, I have defined it as the period from 1350 to 1600. It is a time span that includes several other major historical trends or phenomena, including the so-called Age of Exploration or Discovery, the Protestant and Catholic Reformations, and the beginning of the Scientific Revolution. Because many historians have chosen to avoid the label Renaissance, with its cultural focus and frankly elitist implications, the period is often split between the late medieval and early modern eras. The titles of many books and articles use these terms instead of "Renaissance," which may confuse the young researcher. For my part, I acknowledge the problems with the use of "Renaissance" for the historical period by referring to it as the Renaissance era, unless specifically referring to a cultural or stylistic matter, such as Renaissance art or the Renaissance stage.

The publisher determined the ten topical sections into which this work is divided, but I am fully responsible for the choice of articles that they contain. In each case, I have tried to pick a range of topics that flesh out the general subject—Food, Fashion, Religion—while introducing each topic on a level appropriate to an entry-level student of the era. This is, after all, a work directed to upper-level high school and nonspecialist college students, though many others, including nonspecialist public library patrons, will find it to be of use. I have striven to avoid overly technical vocabulary, or to define such vocabulary within the text, but this work does assume the reader has a basic textbook knowledge of the time period and place.

Besides almost 300 entries, *The World of Renaissance Italy* includes an introduction providing historical context to the entries and a detailed subject index providing effective access to important names and terms in the entries. A chronology

of the period lists important dates and events, and an appendix of popes and European and Italian rulers of the period 1350–1600 is also included. A selected bibliography lists important general information resources on the period. Each entry also has a bibliography specific to its topic and cross-references to other related entries in the encyclopedia.

This two-volume encyclopedia is not an introduction to the Renaissance, but to life lived during the Renaissance era. I have purposely avoided major figures and even well-known monuments to keep the reader's focus on the broader issues and trends of the day. Michelangelo, Machiavelli, and Pope Julius II rarely make an appearance. Daily life does not consist of the extraordinary, though the extraordinary can and does impact it. And vice versa. In covering painting, for example, I decided to focus on materials, techniques, and workshops rather than on styles and individual artists because these underlay the work of every painter from the most obscure to the greatest master. Such choices are made all the easier because historians in many fields have shifted their focus from the great to the common: the life of the soldier rather than the general, that of the court musician rather than the duke, or the common person's diet rather than the great feasts. As a subject, history writing is cumulative, so the student may always seek the famous in other sources, and this is a period with an especially rich historiography in English. For those who may want to know what the famous ate, wore, or heard as they walked down the street, I hope these volumes prove a rich introduction.

Introduction

The term “Renaissance” is a cultural label originally attached to certain styles of art. It has today come to refer to a period of time during which those styles developed, roughly between 1350 and 1600. The label literally means “rebirth,” a reference to the conscious revival of classical influences, texts, styles, literature, and other elements of culture. Of course, these influences often had little impact on the lives of shepherders, peasants, and even construction workers who labored building palaces in the classically influenced Renaissance style. Nonetheless, even beggars would have seen Renaissance sculptures in *piazze*, new and more realistic altarpieces in churches, and prints being sold in bookshops; and they would have heard Renaissance polyphony wafting from the cathedral on major feast days. And they would have benefitted from the monetary wealth Italian societies generated. All of this was different from what had come before, marking the period off from the Middle Ages that preceded it.

If we date the beginning of the era to 1350, in the immediate wake of the Black Death (1347–1350 in Italy), then we have to admit that Italy in 1400 was little different from the peninsula in 1300. In many ways, it would be little different even in 1500. Politically, it was officially divided between the Holy Roman Empire ruled from its German lands, and the French and then Aragonese/Spanish south. The southern kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, ruled from Naples and Palermo, remained largely feudal, with local barons loosely controlled by their rulers. Economically speaking, these kingdoms were producers of raw material, especially sheep and grain. To the north lay a checkerboard of city-states with borders that fluctuated with the endemic wars that plagued them. Although part of the Holy Roman Empire, these city-states had gained many liberties over the years and, by 1350, were essentially independent of outside control. Some were republics, ruled by oligarchies of merchants and other guildsmen who rotated offices among wealthy families. Others had been republican in structure, but sought safety or peace by trading their self-control for rule by a lord (*signore*), often a military leader, or, in the case of Milan’s Visconti, the archbishop. When

it suited their purposes, emperors raised some of these families to the rank of count, marquis, or duke (Milan's rulers generously donated 100,000 ducats for the privilege). Genoa and Venice, both oligarchic republics, had elected dukes, or *doges*, as heads of state. Venice, however, had never been under imperial control and remained fiercely and successfully independent throughout the Renaissance era. Finally, there were the Papal States, which stretched from coast to coast across central Italy between Naples (known as *Il Regno*, "The Kingdom") and the many city-states to the north. The Papal States originated from a grant of land and political independence made to the papacy by the Carolingian rulers of the eighth century. The popes, then, were the spiritual leaders of the Catholic Church, which dominated the Italian world, and to which the vast majority of Italians belonged, but also monarchs who collected taxes, made laws, and waged war. For much of the fourteenth century, popes had abandoned Rome for Avignon, which is located in what is today southern France. It took decades after the popes' return to the city in the late fourteenth century for Rome to recover as a political force and cultural and economic center.

If the south was the land of raw materials, the northern and central states were producers, merchants, and consumers. Much of the political history of Milan, Florence, Venice, and the Papal States consisted of wars to expand and protect and regain control over smaller cities and towns and their hinterlands. Much of the history of Renaissance-era Italian cities, such as Siena, Pisa, Treviso, Verona, Pavia, Perugia, Bologna, and Padua, was spent in the shadow of these larger powers. Signorial states such as Ferrara, Mantua, Rimini, and Urbino strove to retain their independence by aligning themselves with one coalition after another, often providing mercenary troops or, in the case of Ferrara, artillery. While successful wars provided the winning cities with honor and glory and a larger tax base, they also provided a rural breadbasket that fed their urban populations. In much of northern and central Italy, the medieval feudal landlords had been absorbed into urban society or swept away. Local commercial agriculture carried out on land owned by urban and rural landlords provided markets and food shops with wide varieties of foodstuffs, especially the bread, wine, and olive oil that were the staples of Mediterranean culture. But the hinterland, or *contado*, also provided other types of produce, cheese, fish and meat, eggs, timber, bricks, cotton and flax, wool, and firewood, as well as streams that powered mills, servants, and emigrants to replace laborers lost to recurring bouts of plague. All of these important political and economic shifts affected the daily lives of Renaissance-era Italians.

Despite the economic importance of rural areas, Renaissance Italy had an urban society and an urban economy. Whether oligarchs or monarchs, Italian rulers lived in and governed from palazzi in cities, and not rural castles. With the exception of some water mills and some noxious activities, manufacturers were urban. Even the

glassworkers cloistered at Murano were technically in Venice. The Church oversaw its flocks from urban headquarters centered on the cathedral church and the bishop's palazzo; universities and most formal education were anchored in cities; ports, warehouses, and foreign communities of merchants were urban; and any variety at all in retail goods was only to be found along city streets. Markets and fairs filled *piazze*, not rural fields, and wealth was concentrated in the coffers of the state, businesses, and businessmen, and these coffers were safely tucked away in urban public and private palazzi. Wealth fueled cultural patronage, which found its venues in urban courts, cathedrals, churches and chapels, and palazzi. When rural villas became showcases for art, music, theater, or dance, it was because of urban wealth acquired through banking or trade. Even traditionally noble and rural pursuits such as jousting and horse racing took place in city *piazze*. All of this urbanity was reinforced by the period's obsession with the Classical heritage of Greece and Rome. Greeks and Romans had developed civilizations that were urban, and in many ways these were the models for life in the Italian Renaissance era. Many Romans had also praised the peace and leisure one could pursue when away from the city, and wealthy Italians embraced these as well in building their rural villas.

The urban economies that provided for culture and leisure were quite sophisticated and based on the exchange of money and, increasingly, on credit. Emperors had given cities the right to mint coins, and they did so. Each state had its own coinage, which encouraged banking, which was originally the exchanging of Florentine florins for Venetian ducats, and these in turn for Papal scudi. In the international forum, non-Italian coinages or values had to be translated into local currencies, and vice versa, so merchants and bankers were often the same people. Given its position in Europe and in the Mediterranean, Italy was a natural center-point between the great emporiums of the Near and even the Far East and markets throughout Europe. Rowers took Venetian galleys as far as the Don River in Russia, and merchants filled these in Constantinople, Alexandria, Tripoli, and Beirut with exotic goods, including fine metalwork, porcelain, silks, and spices—which were important as drugs. Italians learned to imitate much of what they saw and purchased, and excellent craftsmen were soon competing in Arab and Turkish markets with Eastern-inspired Italian products. Italian glass, ceramics, and silk and light woolen cloth especially found favor. Of course, Eastern goods returning through Venice found ready markets among elite customers in Italian cities and in northern and Spanish urban centers as well. Pack trains laden with spices and other treasures trudged across Alpine passes to Austrian, German, Swiss, and French markets. An annual galley fleet left Venice for Majorca, Cadiz, Southampton, London, Bruges, and Antwerp. By the sixteenth century, northern European ships were visiting Italian ports, cutting out the middlemen, while Portuguese and soon Dutch and English vessels were directly drawing goods from the Indian Ocean.

Politically speaking, between 1350 and the 1490s Italy was largely left to itself. Its wars were local affairs, and even when, after 1400, Venice began grabbing Milanese territory, the emperor refrained from supporting his ally and feudatory. The fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453 and a resurgent Milan led to the Peace of Lodi (1454) and a grand alliance of the major Italian states. A series of diplomatic missteps and basic greed led King Charles VIII of France (r. 1483–1498) to exercise French claims to Milan and the Kingdom of Naples in 1494. He did so by leading down the peninsula an army with the largest artillery train Italy had ever seen. Causing only minimal damage on the way, the French took Naples and Charles was declared king. In the face of disease and local disaffection, he pulled his army out, creating a power vacuum into which the Spanish soon moved. The emperor, roused by his loss of Milan, pressed his claims against the French for that city. Italy was now to be the arena for bellicose major European powers who sought to control Italian wealth and territory. A second French invasion by Charles's successor, Louis XII (r. 1498–1515), and several by Louis's successor Francis I (r. 1515–1547), kept Italy in turmoil and affected daily life throughout the peninsula in the sixteenth century. When Charles I of Spain (r. 1516–1556) also became Holy Roman emperor (as Charles V) in 1519, France was outflanked and the stakes raised. The kingdoms of Naples and Sicily lost their kings and became part of the Spanish Habsburg realm administered by Spanish viceroys. Venice nearly lost its independence in 1509; Rome was sacked by Imperial troops in 1527; and Florence was besieged 1529–30 and was forced to become a duchy under Medici rule.

These events humbled and devastated Italy's great cities, affecting the lives of Italians at all levels of Renaissance society. Proud merchants, nobles, and cardinals fled for the duration, only to return to smoldering ruins. Venice's subject cities allied with the emperor against their Venetian mistress. In Rome, clergy were murdered, nuns violated and killed, and churches despoiled by German troops. Florentines suffered isolation and bombardment. In each case, the Holy Roman Empire won and the Italians paid dearly. Later, French and Spanish troops fought over control of Siena, which ultimately became part of the Tuscan Grand Duchy of Cosimo I, who himself married a Spanish princess, Eleanora of Toledo. Meanwhile, the popes largely withdrew from the political arena and oversaw the various sessions of the Council of Trent (1545–1563), the Catholic answer to Church weaknesses and spreading Protestantism. The impact on Italian Jews, Protestants, and free thinkers was crushing. It is not a coincidence that the sixteenth century saw the first Jewish ghettos, the *Index of Forbidden Books*, and the revival of the Inquisition. Under Spanish political hegemony, the Italian peninsula became a political backwater.

Historians who care argue over when the Renaissance era came to an end. Was it with the Sack of Rome in 1527, or the end of the Habsburg-Valois wars in 1559,

or the termination of the Council of Trent in 1563, or the death of Michelangelo in 1564? No single event brought the period to a close any more than the Black Death had begun it in the mid-fourteenth century. The choice of 1600 is as arbitrary as the selection of any other date or event. One thing, however, is indisputable: Italy—and all of Europe—had changed greatly by 1600.

And yet, however we celebrate the many accomplishments of the Italian Renaissance, the great arc of daily life in Italy maintained a certain continuity between 1350 and 1600. Most Italians were occupied in the same jobs, they formed and conducted family life in much the same ways, they ate the same foods, heard the same sermons, and attended Mass in the same churches that their ancestors had attended. They spoke the same dialects and praised the same fourteenth-century poets. Bells still rang to start the workday, and the streets people followed to their jobs had changed little over the period. Rome was an exception with its population growth and urban development under papal patronage. In many places, the value of workers' wages had dropped by 1600, so they could buy fewer things and less food than previous generations, a real step backward. Life in the countryside for the *contadini* changed little over the period, being subject to the vagaries of warfare and disease. But the accomplishments of Italian Renaissance artists, rulers, popes, and merchants were achieved only on the backs of oarsmen, peasants, seamstresses, miners, woolworkers, bricklayers, carters, food sellers, moneylenders, laundry-women, innkeepers, and all those whose daily labors go unmentioned in the guidebooks and museums today. Historians have done much to bring these lives to our attention, and to them these volumes are dedicated.

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Chronology

1347–1350	The Black Death strikes Italy; Boccaccio's <i>Decameron</i> is published.
1376	Pope Gregory XI returns to Rome.
1378–1381	War of Chioggia establishes Venetian control of eastern Mediterranean; Peace of Turin ends war.
1378–1382	The Ciompi Revolt and government reforms begin in Florence.
1378–1417	The Great Papal Schism begins and is by Council of Constance (1414–1418).
1386	Construction of Milan's great Gothic cathedral begins.
1395	Giangaleazzo Visconti become Duke of Milan.
1397	Medici bank is started.
1397	Manuel Chrysoloras begins teaching of Greek in Florence.
1399–1404	Siena surrenders sovereignty to Visconti of Milan.
1402	Giangaleazzo Visconti's expansion of Milanese territory ends with his death near Florence; Filippo Maria Visconti begins 45-year reign.
1405	Venice begins assembling its Terra Firma empire of mainland possessions.
1406	Florence conquers Pisa.
1420–1436	Filippo Brunelleschi oversees construction of the dome of Florence Duomo.
1423	Vittorino da Feltre opens first humanist school in Mantua.
1427	Florence's first <i>catasto</i> tax census provides valuable demographic data.
1433	Cosimo de' Medici is exiled from Florence.
1434–1494	The Medici control republican Florence.
1436	Leonbattista Alberti publishes <i>On Painting</i> .

- 1439** Council of Union of Western and Eastern Christian Churches is established in Florence.
- 1443** Alfonso V the Magnanimous of Aragon and Sicily becomes king of Naples, ending Angevin French rule and unifying Naples and Sicily under Spanish control.
- 1444** Medici Palazzo begins in Florence; Palazzo Ducale begins in Urbino.
- 1447–1450** Milan becomes Ambrosian Republic.
- 1450–1500** Sforza family control Milan after Francesco's coup.
- 1453** Ottoman Turks conquer Constantinople (Istanbul); Greek scholars migrate to Italy.
- 1454** Printing press is invented in Germany; Peace of Lodi ends major wars in Italy for a generation.
- 1455** Italic League formation lays out spheres of influence of Rome, Naples, Venice, Florence, and Milan.
- 1458** Sicily splits from Naples, ruled by the Aragonese Juan and Ferrante, respectively.
- 1465** First printing press in Italy is established, at Subiaco near Rome.
- 1469–1492** Lorenzo de' Medici, *Il Magnifico*, controls Florence.
- 1478** Pazzi Conspiracy in Florence murders Giuliano de' Medici.
- 1487** After two-year rebellion, Ferrante of Naples slaughters barons at Castelnuovo in Naples.
- 1490** Aldine Press is established in Venice; Isabella d'Este settles in Mantua, becoming a major cultural patroness.
- 1492** Christopher Columbus, sailing for Spain, lands in the West Indies.
- 1494–1498** Friar Girolamo Savonarola's reform in Florence; ends with his burning.
- 1494** French King Charles VIII invades Italy, beginning Habsburg-Valois or Italian Wars that end in 1559; Charles conquers Naples temporarily.
- 1495** French retreat from Naples, fighting League of Venice at Fornovo.
- 1497–1498** Portuguese Vasco da Gama opens sea route around Africa to Indian Ocean.
- 1502** Reestablished Florentine Republic makes Piero Soderini Standardbearer of Justice for life, essentially doge.
- 1504** Aragonese reestablish control in Naples, replacing king with a viceroy; Michelangelo's *David* is erected in Piazza Signoria.

- 1506** Rebuilding of Rome's old St. Peter's Basilica begins under Pope Julius II.
- 1509** League of Cambrai is formed against Venice; war follows; Venice is defeated at Battle of Agnadello.
- 1512** Aragonese overthrow Florentine Republic, reinstated Medici as rulers.
- 1513** Sistine Chapel ceiling is finished; Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Prince* is published.
- 1516** German king Charles V becomes Spanish ruler Carlos I and king of Naples; Jewish ghetto is established in Venice.
- 1517** Reformation begins symbolically with circulation of Luther's 95 Theses.
- 1519** Charles Habsburg is elected emperor as Charles V.
- 1525** French King Francis I invades Italy taking Milan but losing to Imperial army at Pavia; climax of three-decade-long Italian Wars begins.
- 1527** Imperial troops sack Rome.
- 1528** Baldassare Castiglione's *The Courtier* is published.
- 1530** Siege of Florence begins; Congress of Bologna ends Habsburg-Valois Wars in Italy on pro-Habsburg terms; Charles Habsburg is crowned emperor; Alessandro de' Medici is made Duke of Florence by emperor : Florentine republicanism comes to a permanent end.
- 1540** Society of Jesus (Jesuits) is founded.
- 1541** Jews are expelled from Naples.
- 1542** Roman Inquisition is formally revamped.
- 1545–1563** Council of Trent reforms Catholic Church.
- 1550** Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* is published.
- 1555** Rome's Jewish ghetto is established; Siena's independence ends with Florence's conquest.
- 1559** Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis ends French territorial claims in Italy; *Index of Forbidden Books* is first published by Pope Paul IV.
- 1571** Spanish/Venetian navy defeats Turks at Lepanto.
- 1582** Pope Gregory XIII establishes new calendar.
- 1590s** Terrible famine devastates Italy.

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Acknowledgments

This is a work of synthesis that has relied entirely upon the work of hundreds of scholars working in a multitude of historical fields related to the Renaissance era in Italy. The bibliographic section lists many of these, but many more go without formal recognition. Without their work, this encyclopedia, which I dedicate to them, would not be possible. In addition, I owe debts to a few particular individuals, including Bailey Scoggin, whose work on the articles on music was invaluable; Becca Reimer, who did much for those on theater; and Mr. Pipes, whose general research helped immensely, and who, I hope, learned a few things along the way. Finally, thanks to John Wagner, whose helpful feedback and gentle prodding kept the project on schedule.

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ARTS

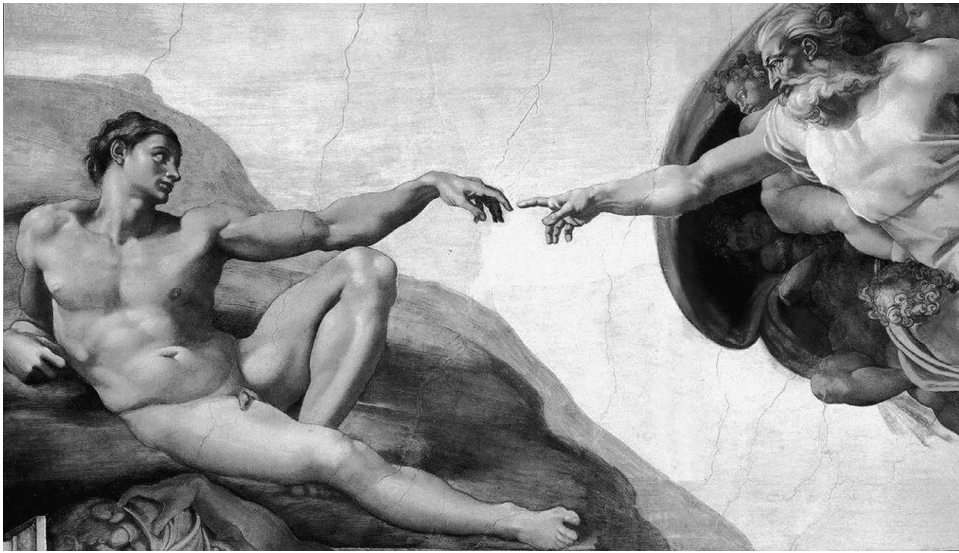


INTRODUCTION

The arts come in many forms, and the Italian Renaissance as a creative time period made major contributions to each of them. There are the visual arts of painting, drawing, sculpting, fine metalwork, ceramics, marquetry, and printmaking; the performing arts of music, theater, and dance; literary arts of poetry, storytelling, letter writing, and literary nonfiction; and environmental arts of architecture, landscape, and interior design. Many of the trends that shaped these arts are virtually synonymous with “Renaissance.”

These trends included classicism and humanism, which sought to revive Classical artistic forms and norms to advance all of these arts toward greater perfection. Another was naturalism and realism, based on a positive attitude toward the physical world and people’s place in it. This had begun earlier in some arts such as sculpture, even before the Renaissance era. A third was a process some have labeled secularization, based on similar changes in attitude, but specifically setting aside spiritual and religious values for worldly ones. This did not mean that the arts became “pagan” or lost their religious functions. Most of the great names in the arts carried out major and lasting works for the Church: Michelangelo’s frescoes and statues (*David* was originally meant for the Florentine cathedral), Palestrina’s Masses for the popes, and Palladio’s Venetian church designs. But next to these were advances and masterpieces that were deeply concerned with this-worldly values: madrigals on Petrarchan poetic texts of love and loss, city hall and ducal palazzo fresco cycles recalling history and Classical values, and the birth of *com-media d’arte* from street theater.

After the Black Death, Italy’s wealth was spread out a bit more widely among the survivors, and many of these chose to spend it more lavishly than generations before. The Aristotelian idea that a city or a noble court needed to be “magnified,” or made greater by cultural activity and monuments, became popular among political and economic leaders, and magnificence became a desired quality. Even Lorenzo de’Medici, banker and de facto ruler of later fifteenth-century Florence,



The Creation of Adam is the central scene in the vast fresco that covers the ceiling of the Vatican's Sistine Chapel (1508–1512). Imagined as an old yet powerful human male, God reaches to His new creature to give him life. Adam's humanity is characterized by his frank nudity, and his innocence by his facial expression. The biblical story is here turned into a humanist declaration: Humanity was made in the image and likeness of God. (Michelangelo, *Creation of Adam*, 1508–1512, Sistine Chapel, Vatican City)

became known as Il Magnifico for his attitudes and efforts. Patronage by such men and women of wealth and power who were neither serving the Church nor representing traditional feudal dynasties fueled production in all of the arts. A growing sense of what would come to be called good taste, as well as often fierce competition among patrons and producers alike, spurred artists, composers, writers, builders, and others not only to excel by existing standards but also to advance the standards themselves. In many arts, the first step was to emulate the ancients, the second to equal them, and the third to outperform them.

Studying the arts means making contact with the works themselves to the extent possible. Most of us have to read literary works in translation; we read rather than experience plays; we view art works as pictures in books or on the web; and we listen to the period's music through earbuds as we jog or do homework. Yet even if we have the good fortune to visit Italy, we soon realize that what we see is not what was. Churches, villas, and palazzi have changed radically; altarpieces hang on museum walls not behind chapel altars; and musical performances are often on modern instead of period instruments and in modernized venues with very different acoustics from those of 500 years ago. Despite these obstacles, students and scholars strive to understand Renaissance artistic productions, and bring to bear tools for doing so unavailable or of little interest to the people of the time.

Tools for penetrating the surfaces of artworks allow modern researchers to understand the procedures and secrets of past artists better than they did themselves. Long-term studies of iconography, or the meaning of images, uncover patterns of borrowing and revival of themes, characters, and interpretation. Letters and diplomatic reports describe festivals, theatrical productions, and musical performances. How artists worked in various media is addressed in shop manuals and accounts, personal documents such as letters, inventories of shop tools and works finished or in progress, and books on the individual arts that were published at the time. Lists of personnel at noble courts and city halls reveal musicians, painters, and dance masters. Starting around 1500, publishers put out song books with words and music, dance manuals with the steps to each diagrammed, collections of instrumental music for keyboards and lute, and choir books featuring the era's polyphonic masterworks. This is not to mention the printed editions of novelle, poetry, literary letters, artists' biographies, plays, and Classical literature that flew from the presses, especially in Venice.

One of the reasons for including arts as a category in a series on daily life is that historical research on economics, politics, religion, society, and culture generally confirms the importance of these aspects of life to the arts, and of the arts to all of these areas of human endeavor. Renaissance arts would look and sound very different had the Catholic Church not been the dominant religious force on the peninsula. Had one power, such as Spain, controlled Italy's political life, rather than numerous city-states, then centers such as Milan, Venice, and Florence would have been provincial backwaters rather than the cultural powerhouses they in fact were. Had Venice not maintained its close economic ties with the Byzantine and Islamic worlds through maritime trade, their wealth and cosmopolitan cultural influences would have been severely diminished. To study the arts, then, is to study their contexts and the broader fields that shaped them, for the arts were expressions of political intention, religious orthodoxy, social coherence, and economic power and priorities. And all of this found its way into people's daily lives.

ANTIQUITY, CULT OF

The Classical world of Greece and Rome had its fascination for every Italian generation that followed their decline. Italians lived surrounded by antique buildings, ruins, sarcophagi, city walls, monuments, and chiseled Latin inscriptions. Some traced their ancestors to the Romans who once ruled the world, and Roman lore attached to every city, except Venice. Just below the earth's surface lay gems, rings, pottery, statues, coins, mosaics, and artifacts of all kinds. When the educated read

Roman history they touched their own past. Medieval Italians took what came their way, but Renaissance poets, scholars, sculptors, architects, philosophers, painters, political thinkers and leaders, dramatists, and a host of others sought out and directly engaged the ancients to learn from them, appreciate them, emulate them, and surpass their greatness.

Imagine that in the mid-1400s excavation for a new palazzo in Verona unearths a life-sized nude female statue. It is missing an arm and its head, but its lines are supple, sensuous, and realistic. The contractors are savvy enough to brush it off and present it to the owner. He is educated and sophisticated and appreciates the piece as his own link to the Roman past. Displaying it shows his good taste, though the notion is just being born. His son finds the work erotically suggestive. Word spreads and it receives numerous visitors. A local sculptor who works in the same Classical style admires the artist's skill and eye for feminine beauty; a local scholar compares it with other, similar works, desiring to determine its meaning, identification, and perhaps original use; the bishop condemns its pagan origins and unseemly naughtiness; a humanist notes that a Classical author from ancient Verona mentions a work that might be this one; a painter sends an apprentice to sketch the work from several angles; a dealer in antiquities provides an approximate value and offers to buy it, or to sell to the owner other ancient pieces to display with it; and the *podestà* sends a note of appreciation for the display, which adds to the city's magnificence, he notes. Antiquity and its relics meant different things to different people. Eventually the owner relegates the work to the garden of his villa, to be enjoyed by visitors, himself, and future generations.

Similar observations might be made of a newly discovered manuscript version of a political speech by Cicero: the new owner holds Antiquity in his hand—or so he thinks (it is really ninth-century); the philologist studies its Latin expression and compares it with other works; the book dealer offers to sell the manuscript, and the printer offers to publish it; the historian wants to put it in the context of Cicero's other speeches; the philosopher categorizes the thought it contained, and the politician seeks to apply it to his own city-state; the humanist-collector wants a copy in his library.

The remains of Antiquity stimulated a range of Renaissance-era people, especially artists and those who hired them. As they learned about Roman Antiquity by reading its authors, they discovered that their Roman forebears had also profited from those in their past, especially the Greeks. Ancient Romans uncovered, bought, sold, stole, pillaged, exchanged, and collected and displayed works of art and read works of literature, and creative Romans in their turn had been heavily influenced by what they saw. But it was a debt only realized after Renaissance-era Italians mastered Greek in the fifteenth century. In studying Cicero, Italians learned how extensively he and other philosophical Romans borrowed from Hellenistic

philosophers; and poets Vergil and Ovid revealed their debts to the Greeks. The Renaissance writer, artist, patron, architect, and philosopher sought to confront the world of their own experience on its terms, and they believed that the ancients did so in ways that had been lost during the intervening thousand years (Middle Ages). In their own ways they dismissed their immediate predecessors, with their Byzantine art, scholastic philosophy, poor Latin, and ignorance of the grandeur that supposedly was Rome. The high priests of the Cult of Antiquity sought to replace all this with the remnants and spirit of the past and with new and greater accomplishments achieved in that spirit. For many, of course, the Cult was heresy, and for them the only lesson to be learned was to rely on one's own experience or on traditions untouched by pagan Antiquity. For the peasant farmer, the fisherman, soldier, or shepherd, whose muted voice tells us little today, Antiquity was probably irrelevant unless one stole or stumbled across some bit of it of interest to a collector.

For Pietro Bembo the Cult meant using only Latin vocabulary known to Cicero; to Michelangelo, passing off his *Sleeping Cupid* as ancient; to Machiavelli, dismissing 1,300 years of history to find worthy past political or military examples only in the Classical World. For posterity, it has meant that much of great value from Antiquity was preserved rather than burnt for lime or melted down for cheap statuettes. If Antiquity was in no real way "reborn," it certainly served to shape and condition Renaissance-era culture that gazed intently backward to the distant past so that it might move forward.

See also: Arts: Art, Courtly; Art Patronage; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; Sculpture; Theater for the Elite; *Fashion and Appearance*: Gems and Jewelry; *Housing and Community*: Gardens; Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Art, Civic; City Halls; *Science and Technology*: Academies; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Collecting and Collections; Libraries; Medical Education; Pharmacopoeias and Materia Medica

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ART, COURTLY

There were several types of noble court in Renaissance-era Italy. The older monarchies were papal Rome and Il Regno, or the Kingdom of Naples. Lords, or *signori*, had obtained power in thirteenth- or fourteenth-century cities. Some, such as the Carrara of Padua, Malatesta of Rimini, and Scaligeri of Verona, failed, and their small states were swallowed up by larger ones. Florence, long a republic at least in name, had Medici dukes thrust upon it during the sixteenth-century Italian wars. The Gonzaga dynasty of Mantua, Urbino's Montefeltri, Ferrara's Estensi, the Savoyards of the Piedmontese, Milan's Visconti and Sforza, Rome's popes (with many cardinals not far behind), and the Spanish rulers of Naples and Sicily used art and architecture to accomplish many goals.

Fourteenth-century warlords continued to pursue military glory, often as mercenaries, but the rise of humanism and Classical education added an important layer of high culture. To medieval chivalric values were added the appreciation for book learning and the cultivation of magnificence. A fine example is the portrait of Federigo da Montefeltro of c. 1475, in which the mercenary captain relaxes in his armor and a robe of state while reading a massive book. Fifteenth-century lords, increasingly provided with noble titles, built *palazzi* that commanded their capital cities and villas that dotted the countryside. Rather than defensive strongholds, these were commodious spaces emphasizing comfort and stages for political and actual theater. Many were decorated lavishly in the latest styles, furnished with prized antiquities and artistic objects that displayed good taste as well as wealth and power. While many fifteenth- and sixteenth-century rulers had been raised to appreciate fine art and scholarship, the real audience to be impressed was the visitors who arrived from near and far. As on the battlefield, the lords at court were highly competitive among themselves, and their ladies no less so. Lavishly costumed balls, extravagant theatrical productions, terribly wasteful feasts, and the latest music served as propaganda. So too did fresco cycles, statuary gardens, tapestry-lined halls, and collections of small antiquities displayed in a lord's private studiolo and shared only with special guests.

Artistic themes reflected various aspects and values of the noble life. Roman Catholic iconography indicated the chapel and confirmed the orthodoxy of the

court in the face of Jews, Muslims, and Protestants. Sleeping quarters sometimes featured titillating or downright erotic paintings and probably sculptures. More public spaces displayed a range of themes. Some fresco programs such as Andrea Mantegna's in the so-called Camera degli Sposi in Mantua's ducal palazzo directly reflected court life itself. Here the marquis's family relaxes among servants until the eldest son, a cardinal, arrives and is greeted by his father. Depictions of hunting parties gave artists the chance to include lots of portraits of court characters and feature the ruler in a sport that mimicked warfare and was unquestionably noble. At Ferrara and Piedmont tastes ran to the chivalric, with knights and damsels dallying and the men jousting. Sometimes such scenes include Classical figures, one of the most popular of whom was Hercules. Apart from being an Este family name, Ercole, the man turned god was a long-standing symbol of fortitude. Antiquities and Classical pictorial elements or themes directly spoke to the rulers' appreciation of Italians' shared Roman heritage and inheritance. They suggested a level of culture that other educated courtiers and visitors found congenial. Similarly, utilizing the Petrarchan theme of "triumphs" in paintings presented the rulers as successful and appreciative of the single



Federigo da Montefeltro (1422–1482), Lord and Duke of Urbino and famous mercenary captain, is pictured here in his studiolo with his son Guidobaldo. In this portrait (ca. 1475), attributed to either Justus van Ghent or Pedro Berreguete, the duke is surrounded by the trappings of the humanist, scholar, ruler, and man of arms, as he projects the multifaceted image of the Renaissance era ruler. Tempera on wood. (Giuseppe Masci/Alamy Stock Photo)

greatest influence on the era's poetry. Other allegorical and symbolic figures, such as Classical or biblical heroes and heroines or the virtues personified, presented traditional but still powerful signals of the values of the dynasty. They helped raise the ruler up from warlord to noble.

There were few better ways to drive this home than with portraits that captured the complex spirits of the rulers and their family members. Stoical fifteenth-century profiles gave way to more naturalistic and psychologically intriguing personal images. These were usually canvas-supported works that could be transported easily among rulers' various rooms or residences. One of the most famous of the sixteenth-century Medici family portraits was of the wife of Cosimo I, Eleanora of Toledo. Rather than disclose any mental or emotional cues, her stoical face seems to be of carved ivory, and her body is engulfed in Bronzino's magnificently depicted velvet dress. Despite the presence of their son, it sends a clear message that the rulers transcend mere humanity, a note clearly echoed with Giorgio Vasari's painted apotheosis of Grand Duke Cosimo I.

Tapestries

Huge, lush, colorful, portable, practical, expensive, shot with gold and silver threads, and designed to flatter its owner, the tapestry was the Renaissance secular art form par excellence. As Renaissance painting style developed, so did that of tapestries; indeed, many Italian painters designed them. But master weavers in Paris and the Low Countries, especially Brussels, created them. Some patterns became popular, including Raphael's "The Apostles" for Pope Leo X, which series was also purchased by Francis I, Henry VIII, Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga, and Margaret of Austria. Onerous Habsburg regulations (1544) and the Reformation ended tapestries' golden age.

Rulers used all of the arts, including ceramic ware, fine metalwork, intarsia and pietre dure, expensively bound books and manuscripts, and theatrical staging. The result of their patronage was both political propaganda and cultural magnificence. Works of painters, jewelers, sculptors, and miniaturists were gifted or exchanged, and the artists and craftsmen themselves gained international renown by being lent to dynastic friends, allies, and relatives. In this way the court artist, as well as court art, served as a store of wealth and a form of currency.

See also: *Arts:* Antiquity, Cult of; Art, Sacred; Art Patronage; Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; Sculpture; Women and the Arts; *Family and Gender:* Heraldry; *Virtù* and Honor; *Fashion and Appearance:* Art, Fashion in; *Housing and*

Community: Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Noble Pursuits; Weddings; *Religion and Beliefs*: Chapels

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Art, Daily Life in. *See* Daily Life in Art

ART, SACRED

Christianity is a religion with an artistic tradition reaching back to the catacombs. Images of holy people and sacred events, and even of God, have been created, respected, and even venerated, though not always without criticism. Defenders of sacred art have insisted that it serves to instill piety in people, express deep spiritual values and emotions, teach the illiterate, glorify God and His saints, and even serve as instruments of divine power. Renaissance religious art did all of this for society and also reflected the era's new celebration of humanity, which, after all, God made in His own image. Because Christianity saturated Renaissance culture, religious art was found everywhere from byway and street corner tabernacles to nobles' bedrooms, over fortress gates, on walls of hospitals, prisons, and city halls, in books, and, of course, in churches and chapels.



The Pietà (1498–1499) by Florentine artist Michelangelo (1475–1564) was his earliest large-scale sculpture. Carved in Carrara marble, the scene of a youthful Mary holding the dead Christ was created for a French cardinal's burial chapel in Rome and is today in St. Peter's Basilica. Overhearing disbelief that one so young had produced the masterpiece, he carved his name into Mary's sash. (Michelangelo, *Pietà*, ca. 1498–99, Basilica of St. Peter, Vatican)

Sacred art took many forms and served many purposes. During a day spent in Naples, Rome, or Venice one would come across panel and canvas paintings, frescoes, stained glass windows, painted manuscripts, banners, mosaics, prints and engravings, and statues in every medium, including bronze, marble, ivory, terra-cotta, wood, gold, and silver. During the Renaissance era, most religious works were purchased by lay people rather than clergy, though clergy always encouraged such art. On a spiritual level religious imagery was functional and only incidentally decorative. The belief was widely held that God and His saints appreciated and rewarded pictorial gifts and prayers that they evoked. Friars preached that beautiful religious images kept one's eyes on the prize and off of distracting secular or even

offensive pictures. For this reason, residences from hovels to palaces displayed sacred art according to the owners' means and inclination. Gifts of fine art to God's churches or religious houses were also spiritual good works, which is why many last wills contain money for such bequests. Church was also the place to advertise one's thanks for a blessing or miracle, from recovery of a lost item to recovery from plague. Certain images, especially of the Virgin Mary, became known for being the instruments of divine miracles. From the New Testament on, Christianity emphasized that God rewarded faith, and traditions grew up around belief in the divine power of certain objects, especially relics and images.

Miraculous images were given special treatment in churches or shrines built for them, and these drew crowds seeking favor in times of war, plague, or famine. Rulers or civic leaders would stage religious processions in which the images were paraded through city streets to bless the population and demonstrate the power of the holy one depicted. As daily routine Italians would touch a roadside or street

corner Madonna and Child image and recite a brief prayer for good health or safety. Homes had St. Christopher painted near front doors to evoke a quick prayer from those about to travel. Images of St. Ann, patroness of women in childbirth, decorated special trays given to new mothers as well as the wall behind the main altar in the huge Dominican church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence.

Churches and their chapels contained any number of religious images. Some just lay about or were tacked to walls as memorials. Permanent examples include frescoes from the Sistine Chapel ceiling and a small Crucifixion scene over a side altar in a country church. Cycles, or series of narrative scenes, from biblical stories or saints' lives cover walls around a church's main altar and, where they remain, side walls separating chapels belonging to prominent families, guilds, or other organizations. Statues large and small crowded these spaces as did two or three generations worth of painted images. Illustrated—often lavishly—books kept in churches included choir books, Mass books, the Gospels, and psalters, often displaying the donor's heraldry. Each chapel had an altar, and many had painted frontals, rectangular painted panels covering the altar's face. On the wall behind the altar hung a large panel or canvas altarpiece. These could feature many saints, perhaps those whose names family members shared, standing in the presence of the Madonna and Child. Catholic worship spaces also included pictures or statues of the Crucified Christ on, over, or near the altar, a reminder of the connection of the Mass to Christ's sacrifice on the altar of the cross. When religious art is displayed in museums today, it becomes accessible to all. The price, however, is uprooting it from its original environment and stripping it of its sacredness.

See also: Arts: Art Patronage; Music at Church; Women and the Arts; *Family and Gender*: Last Wills and Testaments; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; *Religion and Beliefs*: Bible; Chapels; Christian Art in the Home; Churches; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Crucifix; Mary, Cult of; Memorials *Ex Voto*; Pilgrims and Shrines; Preachers and Preaching; Saints and Their Cults

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ART PATRONAGE

In Italian, the arts patron was and is a *mecenate*, Maecenas being the wealthy middleman who commissioned art for Roman emperor Augustus Caesar. Art patronage involved three parties: the one commissioning, the artist or artists, and the public that both presumed would view the work. Often, those responsible for the space in which the work would be installed—church, monastery, hospital—were also consulted. The impulse to commission a painting, sculpture, or other artistic work for a particular setting and purpose was strong among the ruling, upper, and middle classes of Renaissance-era Italy. Popes, kings of Naples, dukes, and other *signori* lavished resources on decorating palaces and villas, churches and chapels, public structures and private spaces. Monks and their supporters decorated monasteries and churches; confraternities and guilds had their meeting and worship places painted; patrician families or family heads hired the most fashionable artists to adorn their chapels, palazzi, and villas; and city councils chose patriotic and moralistic themes for the walls and ceilings of their headquarters. The dying bequeathed artistic works to ensure remembrance, and their survivors commissioned works to memorialize their dead. The wealthy had their portraits painted or carved; bankers showed their sophistication by displaying classicizing myths or characters; thankful survivors of plague or injuries bought and displayed *ex votos*; and even relatively poor folk sometimes left money in their wills for a Madonna or crucifix. Because they controlled most of society's wealth, men dominated art patronage. Even so, some well-placed women such as Isabella d'Este, marchioness of Mantua, were quite active as art

commissioners and collectors. While a few even commissioned buildings, most were widows who commemorated their husbands with chapels or altarpieces.

Even art that was solely for a patron's personal space—such as the portrait of a lover or a small Crucifixion—assumed that the patron would be the viewer, and it was designed accordingly. Art in a palazzo or villa attracted the gaze not only of family members but also of servants, guests, and future generations. Such images signaled the family's or family head's values, whether religious, historical, dynastic, mythological, or recreational (e.g., hunting or dancing). An individual or family provided public spaces with tabernacles, chapels, tombs, altarpieces, crucifixes, and gifts to monasteries, nunneries, or confraternities to evoke prayers and to reinforce their reputation in the community for piety and spiritual concern. Religious patronage was also believed to have spiritual benefits, aiding the salvation of the giver(s). Religious bodies, for their part, used scarce resources to buttress their social positions by building or rebuilding, renovating, decorating, and embellishing their quarters and semi-public worship spaces. Much of this was also “institutional advertising” that displayed the presence and power of the Church as well as the order or confraternity's place in it. Secular institutions such as guilds, communes, and neighborhoods pooled resources to provide public buildings or art that signaled their collective concern for their town's needs or its magnificence. Rulers magnified themselves, their dynasties, and cities—in that order—with their private and public commissions. Some of this was duly religious, as they knew well that pious patronage brought forth both popular and divine favor. Much, however, celebrated the rulers in traditional, feudal terms or through classicizing myth or history that echoed and magnified their glories, real or imagined.

While the workshops of sculptors, painters, goldsmiths, ceramicists, woodcarvers, and other artists sold ready-made pieces to customers off the street, they succeeded or failed through commissions. Factors such as the shop's location or reputation, a recommendation, or personal knowledge of previous work attracted the patron. Negotiations for a complex commission for a public space might involve a religious or historical advisor, a representative of the venue, a notary to record specifics, the patron (or his representative), and the artist. The artist might have provided preliminary drawings or a model, or mentioned existing works that seemed to reflect the patron's wishes. Discussions would have included how much work the master would actually do; the quality of the pigments; the schedule; living arrangements if out of town; patron's provision of transportation, scaffolding, or other necessities; and arrangements for payments. All would have been included in a formal written contract. Often the final price was decided not by artist or patron but by a panel of the local guild. Wealthy patrons wanted reputations for patience, fairness, and even generosity, to help attract the best artists. Artists wanted to be known for reliability and excellent quality to help attract the best patrons.

Donor Portraits

While medieval artists very rarely included images of their patrons in donated religious paintings, as early as Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel in Padua (c.1305) artists began depicting donors within the picture frame. Kneeling Enrico Scrovegni is shown handing his chapel to angels as the Last Judgment takes place above them. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries such figures—hands folded in prayer or holding a book, rosary, or candle—were scaled much smaller than surrounding saints. With the rise in realism in painting donor portraits were scaled the same as other figures, though they were no less prayerful, attentive, or humble in demeanor.

Aside from the occasional simple conventual patron or monk-painter, Renaissance-era patrons and artists were sophisticated men of the world. They both understood that art mattered to the society and that commissions were extensions of the patron's public persona. They also understood that the commercialized market for art demanded work of the highest quality. Together, the patrons and artists of the Renaissance era created a body of work unsurpassed in history.

See also: *Arts:* Antiquity, Cult of; Art, Courtly; Art, Sacred; Daily Life in Art; Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; Music at Church; Music at Court; Non-Europeans in Art; Painters and Their Workshops; Pietre Dure and Intarsia; Portraits; Sculpture; Theater for the Elite; Women and the Arts; Women Poets and Their Poetry; *Economics and Work:* Banks and Banking; Guilds; Notaries; *Family and Gender:* Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; Names, Personal and Family; *Fashion and Appearance:* Art, Fashion in; *Housing and Community:* Furnishing the House; Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare:* Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Art, Civic; City Halls; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; Republics; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Pets; Pornography and Erotica; *Religion and Beliefs:* Chapels; Christian Art in the Home; Churches; Clergy, Catholic; Confraternities; Crucifix; Friars; Mary, Cult of; Memorials *Ex Voto*; Monks and Monasteries; Nuns and Nunneries; Pilgrims and Shrines; Saints and Their Cults; *Science and Technology:* Glassmaking

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CERAMICS, DECORATIVE

The ancient art of modeling in clay, firing the piece until solid, and painting or glazing it to taste thrived in Renaissance-era Italy. Simple objects for lower-class tables, especially cups and jugs, were simply handmade from local clays and sold cheaply. Sculptors and potters created higher-quality objects, both functional and decorative, from carefully selected clays that were carved, molded, or thrown on a potter's wheel. Terra-cotta ("cooked earth") used unrefined, iron oxide-rich sedimentary clay that was firm enough to be sculpted or molded; maiolica, derived from Spanish products (from Maiorca? Malaga?), utilized fine, white clay that potters further bleached in the sun; and Italian versions of even finer Chinese-style porcelain developed in late Renaissance-era courts.

Fifteenth-century Florentine sculptors such as Lorenzo Ghiberti, Donatello, and Desiderio da Settignano carved terra-cotta into patrician busts, heraldic coats of arms, and a host of other forms. The least expensive of sculptable materials, it could be gilded, painted in naturalistic colors, glazed to appear bronze-like, or left raw in its natural red-brown or other earth tone. In the 1440s Florentine Luca della Robbia began using colored glazes to polychrome his works. Workshops developed molds for easily reproducible domestic and religious objects. Even poor households could afford a small but colorful Madonna and child. Artists also used terra-cotta to shape presentation models for patrons' consideration before beginning work in much more expensive marble or bronze.

Around 1557 the gentleman-potter Cipriano Piccolpasso of Casteldurante wrote in manuscript *Three Books of the Potter's Art*, the first book on ceramics. His focus was on the finely grained, polychrome glazed, and expensive

ceramic-ware called maiolica. He noted many Italian centers of its production, such as Ferrara, Faenza, Urbino, and Venice, and local variations in colors, shapes, and styles of decoration. Initially, colorful, tin-glazed pieces arrived from Spain, and in the early 1400s Florentine potters tried to imitate these using pigments instead of colored glazes. True maiolica required a choice, white clay that was carefully strained and purified. This was shaped by hand, on a wheel (plates and bowls), or in a mold. Delicate thinness was often a quality sought by patrons, especially for fine tableware. Objects were fired first in a large kiln or furnace for 12 hours at a temperature of about 1,000°C, much hotter than terra-cotta. When cooled, objects received a coating of opaque, white glaze (pulverized sand, potash, lead, and tin). Over this dried but still permeable surface were carefully painted colored glazes using, for example, antimony and copper (green), iron oxide-rich Armenian bole and vinegar (red), and antimony with iron (yellow). A final, lead-silicate clear glaze might be applied by shaking it from the brush hairs, lest they smudge the glazes. At first, decoration was fairly simple—heraldic or geometric—but after 1500 patterns grew in sophistication and detail: Piccolpasso mentions the use of mice-whisker brushes. Unlike painters, *maiolicari* had to account for the second firing changing the colors of the glazes: what they saw when they painted was not what they would see; and this only experience taught them. Experience also revealed how to maintain the kiln temperature at 960°C for the 11 hours of the second firing. Lusterware was a specialty provided by only a few shops. Translucent red, golden silver, or gold tints were painted on as shiny highlights, dried, and fired for three hours at 600°C in a kiln deprived of oxygen by adding smoke.

Roman chef Cristoforo Messibugo wrote of a Roman feast for 54 guests utilizing some 2,400 plates over 12 courses; Bartolomeo Scappa wrote of 100 dishes being served on 436 plates with beverages served in 88 cups. Nobles and wealthy patricians ordered huge sets of matching maiolica ware: a mid-sixteenth-century potter in Faenza received orders for 3,500 pieces and 7,025 pieces. Plates were usually used for serving until late in the sixteenth century, and could be quite large. Matching or complementary covered dishes, bowls of all sizes, basins, tureens, cups, pitchers, salt dishes, cruets, and candle-sticks covered tables during feasts and decorated sideboards otherwise. Apothecaries used hundreds of labeled and decorated maiolica jars (*albarelli*) to store and display their many spices and medicines; collectively, these constitute the largest surviving body of Renaissance-era maiolica. Sixteenth-century *istoriato* ware refers to domestic maiolica decorated with narrative paintings rather than decorative patterns or heraldry. Patrons favored historical, biblical, and mythological scenes depicted with the same painterly qualities as any work of art.

Pottery as Propaganda

Maiolica painter Francesco Xanto Avelli served Urbino's Duke Francesco Maria della Rovere as artist, courtier, and poet. Forty-four pro-ducal sonnets survive, most of which praise him in typical humanist and noble terms. Between 1530 and 1542 Xanto created a body of *istoriated* maiolica masterpieces, many signed and dated. Some surviving painted pieces feature pro-Imperial allegories of the Sack of Rome in 1527: symbols of the Medici pope lay amid corpses; Charles V's eagle preys on the papal mule; and torches torture the feet of reclining, lascivious "Roma." In 1532 Xanto celebrated peace with "Mars returns to the heavens."

Hard paste porcelain arrived from China and set a very high standard for fine, delicate ceramics. Italians, unable to obtain Chinese materials, experimented with less translucent soft paste imitations. From 1575 the Medici laboratories in Florence produced the most famous examples, of which 70 pieces survive.

See also: *Arts: Art Patronage; Sculpture; Economics and Work: Apothecaries; Imported Goods, Sources of; Family and Gender: Heraldry; Food and Drink: Conduct at Table; Tools for Cooking and Eating*

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DAILY LIFE IN ART

One of the hallmarks of Renaissance aesthetics was placing the human in his or her proper environment. The ability to depict people as they actually appeared and in a naturalistic setting was the prized quality of the Renaissance artist. Frescoes, panel paintings, canvases, book illustrations, prints, drawings, even intarsia and pietre dure works were created to reflect humanity and its world, both of which were the joint product of divine creation and human effort. But humanism added a dimension: that which was worthy of being painted should be worthy of note. Before later sixteenth-century genre painting, peasants and laborers were not worthy of note; nor were children playing or families enjoying a meal. Most Italian artists did not celebrate the average or everyday, but they did not ignore it either. Often they wove it into the background of grander subjects, both secular and sacred, bringing the worthy into the world of the common and the common into the shadow of the notable.

A literal example is from Masaccio's Brancacci Chapel fresco in Florence. The subject is St. Peter, who, dressed in first-century garb, regally strides down a Florentine street. His healing shadow is cast on a series of unfortunates whose features were taken from the local population. By age and possibly status they were types and symbolic, but they were above all contemporary individuals placed in a setting—Florence—familiar to every viewer. At Florence's Santa Maria Novella church, Domenico del Ghirlandaio shifted the birth of the Virgin Mary from ancient Israel to an imaginary chamber in a later fifteenth-century palazzo. The infant is tended to by the midwife and a servant while a group of fashionably dressed women of the Tornabuoni family approach the reclining St. Ann. The room is tastefully neo-classical in a style championed by the architect Sangallo, the visitors are recognizable members of the prominent family perhaps in their own clothing, and the nature of the event—a formal visit by women to a new mother—is a standard Italian birth ritual. Located behind the main altar, the work is a memorial to the most prominent Tornabuoni woman, who died in childbirth; part of a religious narrative cycle; and an intersection of Antiquity and contemporary life that universalizes the ancient event.

In the backgrounds to historical, contemporary, and religious paintings tiny people carry on their many daily tasks as the important figures in the foreground

give the work its meaning. In an outdoor urban setting men work on a new building, lead packhorses, fall off the dock or bridge, play musical instruments, argue, bargain, and beg. Women lean out of windows or lead children by the hand. Shops along streetscapes are open to the passersby; ships in the harbor bob at anchor; laundry flutters in the wind; and a pet monkey navigates a ledge.

Contemporary scenes of good works, such as Domenico di Bartolo's fresco *Care of the Sick* in the still-intact Sienese Hospital of Santa Maria della Scala, bring the viewer directly into the charitable institution with its patients, caregivers, and inspecting patrons. The level of realism is high, and among the crowded figures are clearly shown basins, pitchers, medicine boxes, bandages, and other medical paraphernalia—even a confrontational dog and cat. Though from the 1440s, some of the ceiling decorations depicted and even a foot basin still remain at the hospital. Similarly, at San Martino del Vescovo a series of depictions of charitable events include a small group compiling an inventory of household goods, probably those of the husband of the woman standing in their midst. In 1465 at the court of the Gonzaga in Mantua, Andrea Mantegna began decoration of a large chamber usually called the Camera degli Sposi. Like both Domenicos, Mantegna was a master of realistic detail. In this setting for many of the duke's important functions Mantegna depicted the court gathered and relaxing, and adjacent the duke greeting his son the cardinal, who has just arrived from Rome. The many servants' images are probably portraits, and those of family members do not seem to be idealized. The clothing is detailed and appropriate but not elaborate, and the duke changes from a lounging gown to a smart tunic and hose in which to welcome his son.

Modern historians rely heavily on paintings, prints, drawings, and other pictorial artifacts to understand the physical aspects of the Renaissance era. They read about certain fabrics or other objects in stories, inventories, or accounts, or examine surviving objects in museums. Paintings by credible artists of feasts, battles, construction sites, rooms, wharves, piazze, shops, gondolas, or Carnival can be littered with dozens of objects that formed part of the artist's experience but about which we need to be informed. How painters treated foreigners, Jews, or black slaves sheds light not only on the people themselves but also on the attitudes of the culture recording them. One last field is historic textiles and costume. Renaissance painters could be so precise in their depiction of clothing and textiles that modern experts can distinguish one type of velvet from another.

See also: Arts: Art, Courtly; Art, Sacred; Non-Europeans in Art; Perspective in the Visual Arts; Portraits; *Family and Gender*: Childhood; Servants, Household; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Children; Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Court, Fashion at; Fabrics, Domestic; Fabrics, Imported; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Furnishing the House;

Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Art, Civic; Soldiers; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Civic Festivals; News; Noble Pursuits; Weddings; *Religion and Beliefs*: Friars; Mary, Cult of; Saints and Their Cults

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DANCE, COURTLY

At Renaissance-era Italian courts, dance took two primary forms. One was performances for an audience by dancers on a stage, probably led by a court master of the dance. These spectacles developed in the later fifteenth century and came to be associated with filling the gaps between scenes in a theatrical performance. The best documented of these sets of *intermedii* was developed for the Florentine court for the 1589 wedding of its grand duke. The other form, of course, invited the participation of the court and its guests on a cleared-out dance floor. This might be in the context of an evening’s festivities and involved scores of dancers, or limited to a few of the duke’s intimates practicing the latest steps in an informal setting. Our understanding of court dancing practices is far greater than that of dancing among the lower classes. Manuscript dance manuals by practicing dance masters appeared in the fifteenth century and were being printed in large numbers by the sixteenth. Also, observers were far more likely to describe or comment in writing on the dancing at a court festival than at a peasant wedding.

Court spectacles at their grandest were multimedia shows involving sets, musicians, singers, dancers, and fancy costumes. As with many other types of court art,

these were propaganda works that were meant to display positive qualities of the dynasty or state, or plant good feelings of harmony or peace in the viewers. They could be themed, displaying the erudition of the court in using symbolic Classical figures, stories, or allegories. Dancers, then, might assume speaking or singing parts as characters or roles as moving extras on the stage. The court dance master (*ballarino*) served as choreographer, coordinating the dancers as well as the vocal and instrumental music that supported the scenes. He also very likely danced. He may also have written a treatise on dance for the use of courtiers, and later, to be printed. Domenico da Piacenza worked primarily at Ferrara and trained Antonio Cornazano and Guglielmo Ebreo, both of whom moved about the peninsula's courts.

Dance masters not only trained performers, but all of the court as well. Ducal family members and female courtiers danced for visiting rulers and diplomats, sometimes performing steps native to the guests' home country. But for both men and women to learn to dance was also to learn to move and stand with grace, to impose on the personal space of another and then elegantly withdraw. Proper training began in childhood. The quality of a court's dancers was a sign of its sophistication, and diplomats wrote home concerning even informal displays of talent or embarrassment.

No one could just pick up courtly dancing. For courtiers and guests alike, the dance floor was a competitive arena where natural talent for graceful and subtly seductive movement had to have been wedded to training in the specific dance moves expected for a given type of dance. In the early Renaissance era most dances seem to have been so-called round dances, similar to square dancing. During the fifteenth century men and women were more likely to pair up, which made things much worse for the clumsy or drunk or untrained. Dances were combinations of single steps, double steps, turns, half turns, approaches, withdrawals, leaps, skips, and pauses with changes in tempos and rhythms as the musicians dictated. Despite all, the dance floor was to be a sea of harmonious movement. Dance masters opined repeatedly that only the aristocrat could learn to dance properly, as the lower class person was simply too naturally oafish.

Ultimately the instrumentalists kept the dance in motion. They had to know the structures of the many dance forms popular at the time, and it seems that they had to be very good improvisers. Intimate dancing by a few might be accompanied by a lira da braccio or lute, or a keyboard instrument such as a spinet or harpsichord. For learning to dance, to keep rhythm above all, a small drum, tambor, or tambourine may have helped. On or above the grand dance floors the consorts of choice were usually composed of wind and brass instruments, including oboe-like shawms, the trombone's ancestor the sackbut, horns, and trumpets, along with a percussion instrument to keep the players on the beat. These admittedly noisy instruments were needed to be heard across the large halls above the din of chattering dancers, clattering servants, and the swoosh of velvet and satin.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Courtly; Music at Court; Theater for the Elite; *Fashion and Appearance*: Court, Fashion at; *Housing and Community*: Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; Music and Dance in Popular Culture; Weddings

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DANTE IN POPULAR CULTURE

Dante Alighieri (1265–1321) was the supreme Italian poet of the later Middle Ages. Born in Florence and marrying Gemma Donati, he dedicated himself in the manner of courtly romance to Beatrice Portinari. The Platonic relationship flowered in

poetic expression and in *La vita nuova* (*The New Life*), his study of his love and his art. His role as a Florentine politician and statesman of the minority party resulted in his exile in 1302; this in turn prompted his greatest work, the *Divine Comedy*. Written in Italian in a simple rhyme scheme, the three books—“Inferno,” “Purgatorio,” and “Paradiso”—chronicle his spiritual pilgrimage from a metaphorical dark wood of despair to a glimpse of the divine, thanks to the intervention of the sainted Beatrice. Most famous is the “Inferno’s” presentation of hell, which he populated with his Florentine political enemies. He spent twenty years as an exile, despite being invited back, and was buried in Ravenna.

Books, public readings, and then lectures on the *Comedy* fed a Florentine public hungry to hear and understand the great work. The earliest partial commentary appeared in Pisa in 1320, and by 1340 another seven appeared, including the first complete one in 1324. Previously commentaries had been strictly on biblical texts. A virtual cult of Dante began as early as 1350 and continued throughout the Renaissance. His use of the Tuscan vernacular dialect ensured that the Italian language would remain a major vehicle for authors of all kinds despite the growing popularization of Latin. In 1350 Francesco di ser Nardo’s manuscript shop provided his merchant-class readers 100 copies of the *Comedy*, known simply as “Il Dante.” The poet and author of the *Decameron*, Giovanni Boccaccio, led the way by writing *Life of Dante* that appeared in 1351, 1360, and 1365, basing it on “Life of Virgil.” Others followed through the 1500s, including that of Florentine humanist and scholar Giannozzo Manetti from the early fifteenth century. Between October 1373 and his death in 1375 Boccaccio was paid by the Florentine government



Among Dante portraits is that of Tuscan painter Giotto di Bondone (1266/7–1337), the poet’s contemporary. He appears, hands folded, among the blessed in a fresco of Paradise (1332–1337) in the Podestà’s Chapel in Florence’s Bargello Palazzo. For his part, Dante noted Giotto’s fame in the *Divine Comedy*’s “Purgatorio” XI 94–96. (Corel)

and Studio (university) for 60 public readings of and vernacular lectures on the *Comedy* held in the church of Santo Stefano. They were prompted by a citizen petition, whose signers sought to educate Florentines to “cultivate eloquence” and “shun vice.” They were also very popular. The “*Lecturae Dantis*” continued into the fifteenth century, moving into the Cathedral itself. In December 1431 Francesco Filelfo lectured to 200 Florentines. After claiming that Dante would have been anti-Medici, Filelfo found himself exiled from Florence and Dante soon found himself ironically being proclaimed a Florentine patriot. Public readings and lectures also cropped up across northern Italy: in Bologna in 1375, Verona in 1380, at the Studio of Pisa in 1385, Pistoia in 1394, and Siena in 1396.

For over a century at Florence’s Studio (university) scholars such as Boccaccio, Giovanni Malpaghini, and Francesco Filelfo taught “Il Dante” to the elite youth of Florence. Between 1467 and 1470 Cristoforo Landino, who held the chair of rhetoric and poetry, presented a landmark series of lectures on Dante, confirming that Italian could be a literary language of true grace and beauty. His edition of Dante commentary, the first Florentine-printed “Dante” (1471), was likewise a landmark edition of scholarship. Indeed, the invention of the printing press served to spread and solidify Dante’s reputation. Between 1472 and 1500, 31 editions in all sizes came off the presses of Foligno, Mantua, Naples, Milan, Brescia, Toscolano, Florence (4), and especially Venice (7). The following century saw Florence produce another 3 and Venice an additional 26.

Painters adopted Dante’s persona and work in two ways. One was to depict the hell he described so vividly, as did Nardo di Cione in the Strozzi Chapel of Florence’s Dominican Santa Maria Novella church, and Andrea Orcagna in his fresco in the Franciscan Santa Croce across town, both from right after the Black Death. Some believe that Classical elements in Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel have their origins in his fellow Florentine’s “Inferno.” The other was depicting Dante himself: as pilgrim, poet, scholar, prophet, everyman. Before painter Sandro Botticelli fixed Dante’s distinctive facial features, the poet was distinguished by clothing—scholar’s robe and beret—or background. Botticelli created a series of images to illustrate the *Comedy*, a commentary on which he was said to be contemplating. Dante was famous enough even in his lifetime to be painted by Giotto. Andrea del Castagno created an influential portrait about 1450; Domenico di Michelino placed him in Florence’s Cathedral in 1465; Giuliano da Maiano in Florence’s Palazzo Vecchio in 1480; and Raphael in the Vatican (“Parnassus” and “Disputa” frescoes) around 1510. Engravings of his face appeared in printed editions of his works, though outside Florence he appears more generic and less like “Dante.”

Dante could stand for many things during the Renaissance, besides being author of the *Comedy* and notable love poetry. He was a symbol of both spiritual

and civic virtue, ironically a republican despite his work *On Monarchy* praising the emperor, and a model Florentine citizen despite his hatred of his erstwhile countrymen. To scholars he was a scholar and classicist as well as a theologian; to poets he was a master to be emulated; and musical composers tried to capture his spirit. He became a poster-child for Tuscan in sixteenth-century debates over the virtues of Latin and the vernacular, and among Italian dialects. The mid-sixteenth century christened his *Comedy* “Divine” (1555); and many praised him for his presumed role in resuscitating an interest in Classical culture and literature, creating a revival not unlike that of Giotto in the arts. His works were mimicked, praised, satirized, and most importantly read. Michelangelo is said to have memorized the *Comedy*, a feat hardly imaginable today though some have achieved it.

See also: Arts: Antiquity, Cult of; Portraits; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; Women Poets and Their Poetry; *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Politics and Warfare*: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Exile and Exiles; Guelfs and Ghibellines and Other Political Factions; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Music and Dance in Popular Culture; Reading; *Religion and Beliefs*: Bible; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Preachers and Preaching

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GOLDSMITHING AND FINE METALWORK

To thumb through a well-illustrated exhibition catalogue of Renaissance-era swords and armor, gold coins, ducal silverware, gilded manuscript pages, rich brocades, or gold church vessels and plate is an enriching experience. These kinds

of objects possess a visual appeal that has captivated people since gold was first discovered and refined. If gold was king of metals, silver was queen, and gleaming steel was the tough guy at court.

The arts of working all of these metals stretched back into the Middle Ages. Transforming ores into precious metals was virtually wizard's work. The aura of alchemy continued into the Renaissance era with the search for the philosopher's stone and the esoteric technique of turning base metals into gold. Creating fine steel also retained some of that mystique. Transforming metal into precious objects had less mystery about it, but still evoked awe. Civic precious metals craftsmen typically formed parts of several guilds: sword-makers, armorers, jewelers, goldbeaters, gilders, and goldsmiths. Workers in silver, which was often gilded to prevent tarnishing, were usually affiliated with one of these. Venice's goldsmith guild was founded before 1233, Mantua's before 1317, and Siena's oldest statutes, which governed 130 artists in the fourteenth century, date to 1361. From the 1320s to 1380 Florence had 258 goldsmiths and a hundred goldsmiths in 1427. Pope Julius II organized Rome's goldsmiths' guild in 1508. Master craftsmen, even immigrant Germans, were always in great demand, especially at courts in cities such as Ferrara, Naples, Turin, and Milan.

Milan's dominance in steel making, working, and engraving predated the Renaissance era, and by the sixteenth century there were about 50 sword-makers' shops in the city at any one time. In 1540 Vincenzo Figino's shop had 37 employees, from craft masters to apprentices. Shops like his practiced a form of vertical integration. Over a 20-year period he hired 21 filers, five blacksmiths, eight burnishers, five scabbard-makers, 27 sword-smiths, 28 gilders, and one belt-maker. Milan's armorers were likewise well organized and internationally noted as Europe's finest. Firms such as the Missaglia and the Negroni kept many pieces in stock and filled expensive commissions. Italians were noted for decorating steel by chiseling patterns in low relief and engraving intricate patterns that were then filled with gold foil or wire, a technique known as damascening. Sword hilt designs could be amazingly intricate and artful, and were often gilded. A notable example was made for Tuscany's Medici Grand Duke: a dagger and sword pair featuring 680 diamonds. Sixteenth-century Italian gentlemen wore swords as wardrobe accessories as well as weapons. An ensemble of coordinated belt, dagger, sword, and scabbards could be stunning.

Goldsmiths, such as self-promoting Benvenuto Cellini, who witnessed the Sack of Rome and worked for the Medici Grand Dukes, are known for sculptural masterpieces created for heads of state. Wealthy people's tables groaned under silver or gilt-silver salts, cups, pitchers, cruets, candlesticks, cutlery, food-warmers, vases, pails for cooling wine, and plates. An inventory of silver at the duke's court in Mantua listed all of these and more, totaling 359 silver pieces weighing about 543.5 pounds. Painter Giulio Romano recorded some of these lading a credenza

in his fresco *Wedding of Cupid and Psyche* at the duke's Palazzo del Te. Romano also left hundreds of sketches for fancy metalwork, heavily Classical in style, for court goldsmiths.

Much surviving gold ware is church plate: gold or silver objects used in Catholic rituals. The boldest is probably the monstrance, a tall base on top of which sits a small, round glass case in which a Eucharistic Host is carried in procession. The case is surrounded by shimmering gold or gilded rays that reflect the sun or candle flames. More commonly used objects include the chalice, or stemmed cup, in which the Eucharistic water and wine are mixed, and the paten, a small round plate on which the Host is placed.

Most work, however, went to lowlier artisans, such as goldbeaters and gilders. Beaters usually worked with gold coins of a standard size and weight. According to the artist Cennino Cennini, a Venetian ducat of 3.5 grams could produce 145 sheets or leaves (*foglie*) of gold foil measuring 80 mm² each. Gold foil was not beaten directly, but repeatedly through protective parchment or ox-gut sheets, then polished with powdered gypsum. Rollers produced ribbons of gold foil, and wire was made by forcing (extruding) the soft metal through increasingly tiny holes in a continuous motion. Metallic threads were made of silk thread encased in very thin gold or silver foil ribbons. Gilders applied the thin gold products to a wide range of surfaces, including guns, picture frames, wooden statues, manuscript pages, furniture, and jewel settings.

See also: Arts: Art, Courtly; Art Patronage; Painting: Media and Techniques; Sculpture; *Economics and Work*: Guilds; Manufacturing; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Male; Court, Fashion at; Gems and Jewelry; *Food and Drink*: Tools for Cooking and Eating; *Housing and Community*: Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Arms and Armor; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; *Religion and Beliefs*: Sacraments, Catholic; *Science and Technology*: Alchemy; Metallurgy

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Metalwork. See Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork

MUSIC AT CHURCH

All religious music was not sung in church, though much was. When God’s people took to the streets for a procession or other spiritual gathering, there were likely to be choirs and musicians, possibly on decorated floats, as well as the folks themselves singing religious songs or hymns they knew by heart.

One of the most popular forms of lay sacred music was the laud. Written in Italian, lauds were songs of praise, thanks, or petition sung to the Virgin Mary. Beginning in the second half of the thirteenth century groups of men, or men and women, gathered to pray and to sing these fairly simple songs. This was often after the workday was over and in candle-lit chapels and churches run by the Franciscans or another mendicant order. These confraternities expanded their activities to aid the poor and suffering and perform other good works, but their shared spiritual experience was the prayerful singing of lauds. A collection from Cortona, from perhaps the 1270s, provides texts and music of 46 early works. Though not “Renaissance,” by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries they, and many others, had become traditional as confraternities and the practice of singing lauds spread through Italy. The Church supported this lay movement, with the archbishop of Pisa in 1304 granting 140 days “of pardon” from time in purgatory every time a person sang or even listened to a laud. Over time, the laudesi companies became more performance-oriented, as they hired musicians and professional singers for important occasions.

In monastic houses, monks, friars, or nuns gathered several times each day to sing the Divine Office, or Duty, as laid out in the *Rule of St. Benedict*. The heart of the Office was the weekly rotation through all of the psalms in the Old Testament. These were sung in Latin in the choir of the church by all of the community’s healthy members in a form known as Gregorian chant. Attributed (incorrectly) to

Pope St. Gregory I, himself an early Benedictine monk in Rome, these monophonic (no harmonies) compositions move simply and non-rhythmically up and down, with no expression of the text's meaning.

True to its Jewish roots, the Church early also adopted plainchant as the standard way of presenting its most important ritual, the Mass, also called the Liturgy (service). The priest chanted the text of the Mass from the sanctuary and a choir sang responses and supporting hymns, all in Latin. Congregational singing seems to have been limited, even in the early Renaissance era. By the later fourteenth century, composers had begun setting the basic prayers to music to be sung by the choir with or instead of the priest. By the fifteenth century, composers were taking all five basic and unchanging prayers (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei) and treating them as complex polyphonic works for four or five voices (soprano-alto-tenor-bass). As only males could sing in church choirs, the higher parts were sung by boys whose voices had not changed, men singing falsetto, or male castrati. Such elaborate music could only be supported by bishops at their cathedral churches or the pope at St. Peter's or his own cathedral church of St. John Lateran, where the noted composer Giovanni da Palestrina worked for a while. Often a composer would borrow a tune from a secular song, such as "L'Homme armé" (the armed man) and subtly adapt each part of the Mass to it or part of it. As a result, many Masses have names such as *Missa L'Homme armé*, though Trent banned the practice in 1563. Other Masses are named for the feast days for which they were written, such as Christmas, for a passage in the Scripture reading for the day for which the work was written, or are simply named Brief Mass or Mass for the Dead (Requiem). Motets, at which Palestrina also excelled, were usually polyphonic settings of Latin Scriptural passages such as psalms, or specific liturgical prayers in Latin. These would have been sung before, during, or after a Mass or in another religious setting appropriate to the text, as a baptism or funeral service.

Church leaders at the Council of Trent argued over whether to return liturgical music to unaccompanied plainchant or to command composers to simplify the often-unintelligible polyphonic treatment of lyrics. They decided on the latter, rejecting the increasingly complex interweaving of lines of text. Among composers in this clarified style was Palestrina, who wrote many religious motets and over 100 Masses.

Rulers, from the king of Naples to local *signori*, hired composers to create sacred music for their chapel singers and organists. Ducal choirs performed their sophisticated pieces not only in the palace chapel or church, but also in other local churches, especially the cathedral, so that the common people could hear the latest innovations. In the early 1500s this meant a kind of stereophonic treatment using two 4-voice choirs, separated in space and singing "against" one another.

Castrati

Boys aged 7 to 13 with fine voices were castrated—had their testicles disengaged—by barber-surgeons to prevent maturation of their vocal chords. This preserved their clear, high singing voices. Because women were not allowed to sing in churches or chapels, from the 1550s castrati began to replace falsetto and boy soprano soloists. Earliest were French or Spanish, but Italian boys were undergoing the knife well before 1580. Church and chapel choirs in Rome, Mantua, and Ferrara paid castrati 36 scudi per year; by the 1580s that had risen to 300 to 400 scudi, so popular had they become.

Church choirs in Padua and Bergamo seem to have pioneered this antiphonal structure, but it was at the Venetian doge's chapel of San Marco that it reached an apex in the works of Adrian Willaert (from 1527), Giovanni and Andrea Gabrieli, and Claudio Monteverdi.

See also: *Arts:* Musical Instruments; *Economics and Work:* Book Printing and Sales; *Housing and Community:* Death in the Community; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Church Festivals and Processions; Music and Dance in Popular Culture; Songs and Singing, Popular; *Religion and Beliefs:* Chapels; Churches; Confraternities; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Mary, Cult of

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MUSIC AT COURT

Like art, architecture, costume, food, and just about everything at Renaissance-era courts, music was a calculated display for the sake of politics and the personal honor of the rulers. As an old story such as *Tristan* (Strasbourg, 1210) demonstrates, musical skills had long been welcomed in Europe's courts. Competent singers and instrumentalists were prized members of a monarch's or noble lord's entourage. During the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, when entertainment was a form of diplomacy, fine music could lead to satisfactory policy. Italian princes aped their betters further north, and imported composers and musicians from Spain, France, Germany, Holland, and Flanders until well into the sixteenth century. And they often paid them handsomely. In a report to Mantua's marquis we read that Milan's Galeazzo Maria Sforza, perhaps Italy's most avid recruiter, was paying the singer Pietro da Holi 4,000 ducats, in addition to providing a house, clothing, and additional gifts. Other talents received houses worth 700 or 800 ducats in addition to generous salaries. One way to put such stars on the rolls was to create fake offices for them to fill, or to get the local bishop to grant benefices—incomes without real obligations—to musicians. After all, the rulers would gladly loan them to cathedral authorities for major feasts and festivals.

Beginning at the Aragonese court in Naples, from the later 1460s Italy's major courts developed the royal, papal, and ducal "chapels." Like the English Chapelle Royale, these were not worship spaces, but bodies of musicians dedicated to performing sacred music. They were the heart of a court's musical life, and were the ensembles most likely to be loaned out. Between the late 1460s and 1475, Naples, Milan, Ferrara, the papacy, and Florence each established a chapel of singers and instrumentalists. The really valued members could sing and play and do both well. In 1474 Galeazzo Maria had a chapel of 20, and for secular performances a house chapel the same size. The royal chapel in Naples in 1479 numbered 40 members. The best instrumentalists and most pleasing singers lived at court and moved with the ruler from palazzo to villa or city to city. Also mobile were the four trumpeters, three drummers, unspecified number of fifers, and one sackbut player who served and traveled with the duke of Urbino. These played brash, martial instruments that would have been used ceremonially for fanfares, entrances, and drilling troops.

Though Sforza clearly delineated his musicians, it is not clear others did. A keyboardist could play organ for Mass in the morning, teach the duke's daughters in the afternoon, improvise on a harpsichord during supper, and on a portative organ for a dance that night. The later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw great strides in musical complexity. Both singers and instrumentalists had to be able to master new polyphonic compositions on a regular basis, a task made easier once printing music had developed by about 1500. Though popular musical forms such

as the recent madrigal invited the participation of less than virtuoso singers, it seems that at courts these were performed publicly only by chapel or house chapel members. Courtiers could no doubt perform them for their own amusement, but presumably out of earshot of the lord.

Nonetheless, music masters apparently taught girls and young women at court to play the viola, lute, and keyboard instruments. This was for their own pleasure and that of their elders. During one interlude young Bianca de' Medici performed several secular pieces on a portable organ while her sister pumped the instrument's bellows. Whether either or both sang is not recorded. Learning to sing was also a courtly girl's pursuit. A melodious voice was one of a young woman's more desirable qualities, and there was no better way to show it off to potential suitors or their representatives than by displaying it in a solo or madrigal performance.

By the mid-sixteenth century, female singers were performing professionally at courts by themselves or in ensembles with males. They were, however, banned from performing in church settings. Women are also believed to have composed numerous musical works performed at various courts. Perhaps most impressively, it was Mantua's Isabella d'Este who brought the rich musical traditions from Ferrara to Mantua from 1490. She also single-mindedly championed native Italian music in the face of foreign imports from around 1500. Her commissions required Italian verse and traditional Italian musical forms at a time when the Franco-Flemish trend was in full swing. Perhaps the fact that Mantua lacked a proper chapel (until 1560) made performing highly structured music rather difficult.

The Madrigal

Developed in Florence in the 1520s, the four, five, or six-voice polyphonic treatment of Italian poetry known as the madrigal was the quintessential music for the court or wealthy family's palazzo or villa. In the 1530s Venetian presses published the first books of these by Philippe Verdelot and Jacques Arcadelt, Northerners active in Florence. Singable by small groups literate in Italian and musical notation, they evolved to a complexity only trained singers could master. Ornamenting banquets and other ceremonies, background to court life, or simply recreational, madrigals intimately explored the relationship of text and music.

Or perhaps it was a bit of nativism in the face of the Italian wars from 1494. War on this scale made diplomatic niceties such as music and feasting pale to insignificance. Music remained a vital part of court ceremonial and entertainment, but it had receded into the background.

See also: *Arts*: Dance, Courtly; Musical Instruments; Theater for the Elite; Women and the Arts; *Family and Gender*: *Virtù* and Honor; *Fashion and Appearance*: Livery; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Noble Pursuits; Songs and Singing, Popular; *Religion and Beliefs*: Chapels; Sacraments, Catholic

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MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

The God-given human voice was the musical instrument *par excellence*. During the early Renaissance era, sung music was considered natural, whereas purely instrumental music was relegated to “artificial” music. Notation suitable to instruments developed only in the fourteenth century, and this was long used exclusively for dances.



In this detail from the *Wedding Feast at Cana* (1562–1563), Venetian Paolo Veronese (1528–1588) portrays the kind of small musical ensemble that would have entertained guests at just such Renaissance era gatherings at court or in a private palazzo. Bowed strings—viols—formed the core, with wind instruments visible in the background. Originally in the dining hall of San Giorgio Benedictine monastery, Venice; now in the Louvre, thanks to Napoleon. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

That instruments accompanied voices is clear, however, from contemporary images and references in various documents. One from France, dated 1392, mentions singers accompanied by flute, drum, harp, an early bassoon called a dulcian, or the bowed instruments the rebec or vielle, ancestors to the violin. The lute was the instrument of choice for the singing courtier, and a young woman would sing to her playing of a keyboard such as a spinet, clavichord, or harpsichord. Churches had installed organs with one or two keyboards and several types of pipes to play before, after, and occasionally during choral performances at Mass and other liturgies. Its constant tones provided a way to keep singers on key. Court chapels also had installed organs, such as that found in Ferrara's Palazzo di Corte that Duke Leonello d'Este himself played. His choir was so large that they filled the space.

In well-off homes, children or young adults were taught to play the lute or a keyboard instrument, perhaps at the same time that they learned to sing and dance. Over the period of the Renaissance era, access to musical instruments and then books of music filtered down the social scale. German luthiers in Venice created a range of stringed instrument qualities, from deluxe to cheap. In 1535 one shop

had 178 lutes in various stages of construction, repair, or decay, and 200 bellies for new lutes; in 1581 a single lute shop carried 532 for sale, resale, or repair. Manufacturers of keyboard instruments, including the harpsichord or smaller spinet and clavichord, and the bellows-driven tabletop organ, also produced a range of instruments, from furniture quality with mother of pearl inlay and painted covers to inexpensive practice models.

Palazzi were home to small household ensembles who played for their own enjoyment; some hosted musical academies at which virtual instrumental concerts were given; and others hired musicians to entertain for large affairs. One such affair was held by the Venetian Doni family, and had musicians performing on a large harpsichord, lute, flutes, rather harsh crumhorns, and a “case” of bowed viols. The music was to accompany a play, but the musicians also brought vocal part books, indicating there was also singing. More typical, perhaps, were groups that entertained during banquets, staying to provide music for dancing. Guild members who played well often formed ensembles, or consorts, that performed at affairs such as the Donis’. These were more likely to be so-called wind-bands rather than groups of strings, so they could be heard over the din of diners and by dancers. Wind instruments included the double-reed shawm and double-bore early bassoon called the dulcian, and possibly recorders; brass instruments would have been cornetti, sackbuts (early trombones), and horns. Even the Florentine Signoria had a dedicated ensemble of liveried shawm and trumpet players who could be hired to play for weddings, private parties, and during Carnival. These were the best paid of the city’s civil servants and received housing and other perks.

When they were not entertaining diners, ensembles of instrumentalists who were dedicated to a governmental body, guild, ruler, cathedral, or other organization performed at the will of the employers. Many of these had regular and even daily ceremonial functions at the palazzo or hall, including playing during meals. Trumpeters preceded town criers announcing new laws, and court brass and winds signaled such occasions as the entry of a prominent guest to the court or to the duke’s or marquis’s presence. As paintings show, civic and religious processions through the streets featured “loud” instruments: long, straight trumpets, crumhorns, sackbuts, bass dulcians, drums, and even bagpipes.

More intimate groups of softer instruments appear in written and pictorial sources, including paired instruments constituting a *bicinium*. These might have accompanied singers or provided background music to the elite: a bowed and a plucked instrument such as a guitar, lute, or harp; a harp and a lute; bagpipes and the bowed lira da braccio; harp and portative organ; two recorders; and a lira da braccio and lute. Such music would have graced a midmorning in a villa’s garden or palazzo’s loggia or the family head’s studiolo; though maybe not the bagpipe.

But bagpipes would have been welcome in a village festival. In the countryside and among lower classes, used instruments filtered down and were passed along

through generations. The military fife, drum, and tabor might have accompanied a crumhorn or psaltery, with tambourine, small cymbals, or castanets for rhythm.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Dance, Courtly; Music at Church; Music at Court; Theater for the Elite; *Economics and Work*: Manufacturing; *Family and Gender*: Education of Children; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Palazzi; Villages and Village Life; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; Music and Dance in Popular Culture

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NON-EUROPEANS IN ART

Depictions of “the other” by Italian artists usually meant inserting a figure or two into a scene otherwise populated with folks who looked like the artist and his intended audience. These were servants or slaves, foreign merchants, or diplomats;

biblical figures such as eastern kings or the three Magi; or figures in scenes of contemporary foreign courts. Because of their distinctive religion and the fact that many came from the Middle East, Jews were decidedly “other” and will be briefly mentioned here. Depictions of non-Europeans could be quite matter-of-fact and naturalistic, or clownish and derogatory. Italians often had not-hate–hate relations with Muslims and Jews, colored in part by contemporary local or international events, or in which city one was working. Negative stereotypes such as Jewish hatred for Christians and greed, Turkish effeminacy or brutality, or black Africans’ untrustworthiness or sloth sometimes appear in verbal depictions, such as those of blacks and Turks in the very negative *On Human Physiognomy* of c. 1570 by Neapolitan Giambattista della Porta. They do also in prints such as “Turkish Pride” by Niccolò Nelli. Published in 1572, the year of the Christian victory over the Turks at Lepanto, the image right side up is a swarthy “Turk” with a large nose and turban, while upside down, it becomes a bearded devil. Carnival masks, too, could be prime surfaces on which to depict racial stereotypes for a setting in which transgressive behavior and display were expected.

Artists had a number of stereotyping tools with which to differentiate certain ethnic groups, whether for good or ill. Skin tone and facial features such as the nose and lips are often key indicators. Black Africans have dark brown to black skin, flat noses, and lips thicker than surrounding Europeans. If a figure’s Jewish identity was called for—and it often was not: many Hebrew biblical figures appear Caucasian rather than Semitic—then his or her skin tone would often be swarthy, the nose extended, and lips thickened. Jews were often given curly hair and beards, and blacks short and tightly curled locks. Clothing, too, could help identify figures’ ethnicity or religion. Contemporary Jewish males were draped in slightly exotic robes or kaftans, their heads topped by a tightly fitting “pillbox” type of hat. Given that many civic statutes forced Jews to wear distinctive badges or bits of clothing, the appearance of these in a contemporary scene helps make the point. Turks and other Muslim ethnic groups are often given bright, loose-fitting robes and turbans of varying size: the more prominent the figure, the bigger the turban. Black Africans were usually dressed in European-style clothing or exotic raiment as one of the Magi, rather than in native costume, of which artists would have known precious little.

From the mid-1500s a growing fascination with the “other,” whether in the adjoining Italian state or around the world in Japan, led artists and publishers to market ethnic “costume books.” These contained respectful, if often fanciful, depictions of distinctive Italian, European, and non-European fashions. One of the earliest was Francesco Sansovino’s work on Turkish costume of the mid-1550s. The fullest was the second edition of Cesare Vecellio’s *Ancient and Modern Costume* (1598). He included what we might call national costumes for Turks, Armenians, Tatars, Jews, Africans, Amerindians, and even Japanese. Though he claimed some authority for fashions he could not have seen, much of this seems very thin indeed.

Apart from the little known and even less often-depicted Amerindians and East Asians, no group was more affected by stereotype than black Africans. As early as Giotto's proto-Renaissance fresco of St. Francis before the Egyptian sultan, blacks were servants, in this case to the sultan. Giotto's figures are tall, straight, and commanding, however, rather than servile. Stereotypes about blacks reach back to Genesis and Noah's curse on Ham, which was interpreted as black skin. Black as a color was symbolically negative, associated with ugliness and evil. It is not surprising to find black-skinned devils—though not identifiably Africans—torturing souls in hell. Europeans viewed blacks as naturally servile, since the biblical curse included Ham's descendants having to serve his brothers' descendants. Since most blacks in Italy had been purchased as slaves or captured fighting in Turkish or North African fleets or armies, everyday experience seemed to support the cultural tradition. They appear in paintings and prints as musicians, bodyguards, and retainers. Titian's portrait of Laura Dianti, concubine of Alfonso d'Este, includes a wide-eyed young black page staring up at Laura. He wears fine livery of green, blue, lavender, and yellow silk. Titian also painted Fabricius Salvarius with a liveried black page of indeterminable age, staring up at him. In this case the servant all but disappears in the surrounding darkness. Black servants wait on guests in Veronese's *Feast at the House of Levi* and *Wedding at Cana*, and a dark-skinned woman looks down from the ceiling portal in Mantegna's frescoes for the so-called Camera degli Sposi in Mantua.

Venetians, who had the closest ongoing relations with Turks, could produce sensitive images and even portraits of their trading partners and enemies. Bellini's famous portrait of the Sultan in Istanbul was painted when he was in the Turkish capital, and his other works of that period display a dignity and intellectual level often missing from painters who worked from stereotypes.

See also: *Arts:* Daily Life in Art; Portraits; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Economics and Work:* Slaves and Slavery; *Fashion and Appearance:* Art, Fashion in; Literature on Dress; Livery; Social Status and Clothing; *Housing and Community:* Foreign Communities; Jewish Communities; *Politics and Warfare:* Ambassadors and Diplomacy; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Carnival; News

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NOVELLA

The Italian *novellare* meant to narrate or tell stories; *novello* meant new. In the fourteenth century the novella was a new kind of written story-telling, one that continued throughout the Renaissance era and beyond. The earliest authors were Tuscan, who wrote in their own vernacular with the rhythms, concision, and precise dialects of their own streets and rural byways. The characters were sometimes real people and almost always realistic people, and the situations imaginative but as natural as the sun and rain. The novella was a popular story for a popular audience or readership, meant only to be entertaining, though there could lurk a moral to the tale just under the surface. Novellas were often written in sets, usually united by a frame narrative of the tale-spinners, whose contributions to some social forum the author merely recounts verbatim.

The genre was both ancient and new. Stories were drawn from Classical sources, fables, sermons, folk tales, chivalric bits and pieces, proverbs, biblical stories, and that vast store labeled tradition. Yet Giovanni Boccaccio was then, as now, credited with originating the form and format of novellas and the *cornice*, or frame tales, in which they were embedded. The work was his *Decameron*, written in the immediate wake of the Black Death after 1350. His frame tale has ten young women and men escape plague-devastated Florence for a country villa. Here they live a good life of fine food, wine, music, and dancing. On each of ten days each of the ten tells a story on a chosen theme, while colleagues comment on its appropriateness or quality. Even then, critics claimed that what Dante and Petrarch had done for Tuscan poetry Boccaccio did for the Tuscan dialect in prose: transformed storytelling into literature. Stories are humorous, serious, or tragic, but always brilliantly written. They are filled with double entendres, practical jokes, confused identities, deceptions, tricksters, wise servants, and foolish authorities. It is no accident that his opening line reads, “It is a human thing. . .”



Giovanni Boccaccio (ca.1315–1374) was a classical scholar and poet whose *Decameron* (1353) was the model collection of vernacular novelle. A good friend of the poet Petrarch, he penned several other important early Renaissance literary works, including the set of 104 short biographies *On Famous Women* (1374). Seventeenth-century engraving by Cornelis van Dalen after a portrait painted by Titian (ca. 1485–1576). (Library of Congress)

fifteenth-century *Exempli* of Filippo degli Agazzari of Lecceto contains 61 stories; nothing is known of Sienese Gentile Sermini except his 40 *Novelle* of c. 1424; and around 1475 Tuscan country pastor Piovano Arlotto collected tales of his own interactions with other clergy and his congregation.

Boccaccio was soon followed by the Florentine merchant and poet Franco Sacchetti, of whose *Three Hundred Novellas* (1385–1397) only 223 survive. Lacking a frame tale and less literary than Boccaccio's, Sacchetti's collection reflects his own life, observations, and concerns, while his voice provides a commentary. Giovanni Fiorentino's *Percorone* of about 1378 collects 50 stories, many risqué, supposedly related by a chaplain and several nuns. In his *Novelle* (first published in 1816), historian, merchant, and politician Giovanni Sercambi of Lucca has his storytellers escaping Lucca's 1374 epidemic, traveling around Italy as penitents, and telling 100 (later 155) stories he calls *exempli* (examples, usually a preacher's tool). Though consciously imitating Boccaccio, he uses his stories as commentary on his troubled commune, its history, and its Guinigi family rulers. The early

A Woman as *Novellatore*

Noble Paduan poetess Giulia Bigolina (c. 1516–c.1569) was the first female *novellatore*, and the only one to have a novella survive the sixteenth century.

Though her plot features comic cross-dressing, a contemporary historian praised her collection's moral rectitude and decency, comparing it favorably to that of Boccaccio. The dearth of female novelle authors is very likely due to the genre's earthy and often unsavory nature. Themes such as lust, fornication, deceit, revenge, and mockery were considered indecorous for women readers, let alone writers. After all, Boccaccio himself had to apologize to his female audience.

The genre's popularity spread, finding practitioners from Venice to Naples. In 1483 were published the 61 tales of Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, a barber's son and courtier at Bologna's Bentivoglio court. Later fifteenth-century Neapolitan Masuccio Salernitano, secretary to the Count of Marisco, penned *Il Novellino*, a very anti-Boccaccian collection of 50 tales. Whereas Boccaccio celebrated the witty, clever, and transgressive, Salernitano defended the power structure and the status quo that upheld it. Transgressors are not laughed off but brutally destroyed; the moods of anti-clericalism and misogyny are not light but stifling; and virtue is upheld only by punishment of vice. Florentine Anton Francesco Grazzini wrote his *The Suppers* during the early years of Cosimo's Medicean regime. A widow, her brother, four boarders, and four wives with absent husbands meet during Carnival for food and entertainment. He finished 22 of the projected 30 stories, which are obliquely critical of the new regime and puritanically moralistic with a mood not unlike that of Salernitano. It was not printed until the eighteenth century. In the early 1550s, Venetian Giovanni Francesco Straparola published two volumes of 25 and 48 tales in his *Pleasant Nights*. His narrators met in Murano, outside Venice, exchanging stories that included mannerist situations such as an enchanted tuna, and women giving birth to a snake, a pig, and three pups. Arguably, these "monstrous" tales are the earliest fairy tales in Italian literature. *Pleasant Nights* was reprinted 20 times across 60 years. From Ferrara came the *100 Stories* of 1565 by Giambattista Giraldi Cinzio. His ten fugitives from a Roman plague tell serious stories that were meant to support Catholic values and reflect the era of Catholic reform.

See also: *Arts:* Daily Life in Art; Women Poets and Their Poetry; *Family and Gender:* Homosexuality and Sodomy; Servants, Household; Wives and Husbands; *Fashion and Appearance:* Social Status and Clothing; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and *Piazze*; Neighborhood and Parish; Villages and Village Life; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Reading; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Preachers and Preaching

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PAINTERS AND THEIR WORKSHOPS

Among all the arts practiced in Renaissance-era Italy, painting certainly had pride of place. Michelangelo Buonarroti, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael Santi, Andrea Mantegna, and Titian have long been among the most recognizable names in any list of artists, and all were painters who worked within the workshop tradition. To speak of "a Picasso" or of "a Monet" is to speak of the work of a single modern artist who toiled alone. Reference to "a Botticelli" is rather reference to a group effort of apprentices, associates, and collaborators with and under the direction of the master. His hand may have been light or heavy on a given work, but his was only one of several. In smaller shops of less-renowned owners, teamwork may have been even more evident since a customer was less likely to choose such a master for his distinctive or elite style. Whether the Sistine Chapel ceiling or a small Madonna and Child panel hanging in a modest family's sleeping quarters, the painting was the product of a Renaissance-era workshop.

The workspace or shop was probably more cramped and less well lit than one might expect. Many masters used part of their residences for their workshops, while others rented generic shop space that was outfitted for their tasks. In larger

cities there was an advantage to being located close to an apothecary who provided reliable pigments, a goldsmith who gilded frames and sold thin gold foil for panels or book pages, or a woodworker who produced frames and high-quality panels and furniture to be painted. The painter's shop had to be large enough to accommodate as many apprentices, assistants, and partners as would be working at one time; tools, supplies, pattern books, manuals, models, cartoons, and drawings; work under the brush at the moment; and finished work waiting for delivery or for a buyer. A large table might serve as a workbench, a drawing platform, and a surface on which to display drawings to a new client or finished panels to a customer.

Masters were members of the local painters' guilds, and their shops were managed under guild regulations. For example, fourteenth-century Florence required an apprentice be at least 14 and younger than 25 years of age and spend 9 years under his master. Early on he would receive food and clothing, and as he became more useful, his salary grew with his skill sets. Contracts between masters and fathers were for three years at a time, and many notable painters trained under several successive masters. Fathers of prospective painters, like customers, had many options: between 1441 and 1465 Padua's guild listed more than 50 members; Brescia from 1517 to 1548 had 91; around 1500 Milan boasted more than 100 painters; and between 1480 and 1561 Florence had 441 painters and 101 book illuminators. Painting illustrations, borders, frontispieces, and other decorations in manuscripts or deluxe printed books was a specialty in itself. Not surprisingly, many monks and friars practiced the art. It was also a feature of many painters' workshops, including those of Fra Angelico, Taddeo Crivelli, Francesco Pesellino, and Apollonio di Giovanni; the last two of whom were also noted for painting furniture. According to the 1480 tax census Neri di Bicci was Florence's richest painter, whose shop between 1453 and 1475 completed over 400 commissions and works for sale. Most of these were small-scale religious panels for houses and chapels. Right behind him came Giusto Manzani, his pupil, who specialized in painted plaster religious statuettes. Florence's Roselli shop flourished between 1475 and 1525, specializing in printing and all types of painting: on panels, parchment, paper, large candles, shields, masks, saddles, furniture, coats-of-arms, boxes, signs, mirrors, banners, tabernacles, and street decorations. Court painter Giulio Romano also designed hundreds of palazzo fixtures, from cups to fireplace andirons; Botticelli also embroidered, Squarcione was a tailor, and Verrocchio's shop also produced sculptures and gold figures.

Though contracts often specified amounts to be paid upon completion, in fact final payments were often determined by a panel of guild members. This occurred when the buyer felt the original amount too much or the painter too little for the finished product. Frescoes were often priced by the square foot or by the number of human figures; use of gold or lapis lazuli (ultramarine blue) raised cost and price

significantly; the master's reputation and the availability of competitors may have also affected prices. A study of prices charged by Botticelli suggests that typically 25% went for the panel and frame; 40% for colors (less without gold or ultramarine); and 35% for labor and his reputation. Finished shop products were either picked up or delivered, and mounting was provided for in the contract.

Il Libro dell' arte

The Florentine painter Cennino Cennini (d.1427) produced *The Craftsman's Handbook* about 1400. Cennini was a student of Agnolo Gaddi, whose father had learned under Giotto. He may have written most of it while in Padua serving the Carrara court (1398–1403), but some passages reveal techniques only utilized after 1410. It is a comprehensive “how-to” painter's manual in 160 short chapters, and may have been prepared for the Physicians and Spice-sellers' Guild, of which artists were members. The oldest-surviving manuscript was copied in July 1437 in Florence's debtors' prison by two distinct scribes.

Creating frescoes in churches, villas, or palazzi—especially away from one's home city—presented logistical challenges. Abroad, makeshift workshops had to be set up and equipped; arrangements made with local carpenters, suppliers, and laborers; families provided for back home; and temporary residences established. Courts provided adequate quarters, and getting to know who paid the bills was a most useful accomplishment.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Courtly; Art, Sacred; Art Patronage; *Painting:* Media and Techniques; Portraits; Women and the Arts; *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; Apprentices; Guilds; Retail Selling; Wages and Prices; *Housing and Community:* Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare:* Art, Civic; City Halls; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; *Science and Technology:* Alchemy; *Primary Document:* The Artist as a Young Man: Cennino Cennini. “Vocational Advice to a Budding Painter.” *Craftsman's Handbook [Il Libro dell'arte]* (c. 1410)

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PAINTING: MEDIA AND TECHNIQUES

The Renaissance-era painter applied his mineral, vegetable, or animal pigments suspended in egg, water, or oil to prepared surfaces of wood, canvas, masonry, or book pages of parchment or paper. The medieval masters handed over to the Renaissance-era artists most of the tools, materials, and techniques that they used to such remarkable effect, though there were innovations.

Tempera panel paintings could be tiny or many square meters in area with highly complex gilded frames. Specialists prepared poplar boards, joining them with dowels, braces, and glues made of animal skin or cheese. Because wood provides an unstable and porous surface, it was treated with a glue-like sizing and sometimes linen strips. Layers of plaster-like *gesso* made of chalk and sizing built up and evened the surface, which shone like ivory when finally polished. The image outline was sketched in charcoal or "pounced" with charcoal powder through a pin-pricked paper drawing. While earlier artists made trials on the actual surface, over time they came to sketch smaller-scale preliminary drawings on paper or parchment in ink, charcoal, silver-point, or mixed media. The desired outline was painted over in a pale ink and charcoal removed. Nearly translucent gold foil

was prepared by gold-beaters, who could get up to a hundred 8.5 cm² sheets from a single gold ducat coin. Moist red clay bole provided a deep underlayer and served to adhere the gold to the surface.

Tempera paint consisted of thick or thin egg yolk in which a pigment had been suspended. Because they did not blend, coats of color were layered to achieve desired color tones and saturation. Shops bought or made their own brushes of varying sizes, tips, and hairs or bristles from fine miniver to coarse hog. Tempera had to be applied in short, even strokes that left the surface as smooth as possible. Early Renaissance-era painters experimented with linseed or walnut oil as a glaze over tempera, and Florence's Ghirlandaio mixed tempera with oil ("fat tempera"). By 1500 artists such as Perugino were using oil-suspension paints exclusively. These dried slowly and could easily be blended on the surface to achieve subtle effects and a range of colors impossible with tempera. While oil paints were applied to wood-backed surfaces, painters found that stretched canvas provided a superior and more easily prepared one. The tradition of painting banners, flags, backdrops, and other cloth surfaces made the transition rather easy. Canvas was more stable than wood and provided a natural texture to surfaces that patrons found appealing. Canvas was sized and then primed with glue and white lead or a tint. The mirror-like surface of tempera panels gave way to much more expressive combinations of color, surface texture, and application methods that included using a flat knife.

Among pigments, very expensive ultramarine held pride of place. Fine grinding of lapis lazuli from Afghanistan made for a deep and glistening blue that was often specified in contracts. Slightly greener azurite or German blue was copper carbonate with larger and heavier particles than ultramarine, but which cost 1/12 its price. The woad plant provided indigo purple, and the shell of the lac insect a fine red. Vermilion red derived from a combination of sulfur and mercury. Dozens of other natural minerals, chemical products, and organic materials provided various grades of colors. Workshops purchased prepared colors or raw materials from apothecaries and some monasteries. Merchant/patrons sometimes provided their own pigments, thus ensuring their quality and cost. The first Venetian shop specializing in pigments opened in the 1490s. How artists specifically prepared and used the pigments were workshop secrets of the first order.

Fresco painting on walls and ceilings demanded scaffolding and careful surface preparation. True fresco required that the final coat of smooth plaster remain damp so that paint could chemically bond for a very high durability. As with panel painting, early Renaissance artists made trial sketches on the actual surface to be painted, while after around 1450 detailed drawings or full-sized cartoons were prepared off-site. A platoon of assistants aided the master in expanding the

fresh (*fresca*) dampened surface and applying the colors over the reddish under-drawing or sinopia (red ochre in water) that preceded the final translucent layer of plaster. Because degree of dampness affected the final tone of the color, uniformity of the plaster being painted was as important as uniformity of the paint's consistency. Painting on dried (*secco*) plaster was cheaper, could use tempera-like media, and sometimes proved necessary. Unfortunately it left the pigment on the surface of the final layer of plaster rather than integrated with it, and thus subject to flaking off.

Book painters specialized in decorating prepared parchment, vellum, or even paper supplied by specialist shops. Words were usually written or printed on the page first. Early on the medium was glair, whipped egg whites that had been allowed to settle and clarify. Later, tree gums—generically called gum arabic—provided a thinner and superior vehicle for the standard run of pigments. The miniaturists' tools were necessarily smaller and finer than those of other painters, but their patience necessarily far greater.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Courtly; Art, Sacred; Art Patronage; Painters and Their Workshops; *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; Book Printing and Sales; Imported Goods, Sources of; *Fashion and Appearance*: Dyes and Dyestuffs; *Science and Technology*: Alchemy

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PERSPECTIVE IN THE VISUAL ARTS

Florentines taught the world to see. Before the 1420s the world was considered a dim reflection of divine geometry—literally “measuring the earth”—that shaped the cosmos. Depending on the thinker’s theory, the human eye was a flawed instrument that either reached out to grasp what the flawed world had to offer or a passive tool for collecting what came its way. For the surveyor, architect, or maritime navigator, the approximations at which the eye and other tools arrived were good enough to accomplish their respective tasks. For artists, who sought to reproduce on flat or nearly flat surfaces what the eye captured, approximations were also good enough. Since the time of Giotto in the early 1300s, painters had been able to paint in such a way that there was an illusion of three-dimensionality on a two-dimensional surface. Giotto himself painted crowds in which people in the front ranks were slightly taller than those further back, and famously added a row of painted protruding beam ends that, when viewed from one spot, seemed to splay at angles to the left and right the way the eye would see real beams. Such artists understood that they wanted to paint in such a way that the result mimicked the way the eye saw and not the way things were in reality. For in reality the people in front and back were all the same height and all the beams stuck straight out. Only where we stood and the way our eyes worked called for illusion.

For those less concerned with how nature appeared to a spectator’s eye, matters of size and position were largely symbolic. Backgrounds were of gold foil, angels hovered in the air, and either God the Father or Mary and Jesus were giants



Giotto di Bondone (1266/7–1337) is credited with initiating the naturalistic style of painting that characterized the Italian Renaissance. He replaced relatively flat and lifeless human forms that were typical of Byzantine-style Italian paintings with animated and fleshed-out figures. He worked in Rome and Naples, and his famous religious fresco cycles survive in Florence (Sta. Croce), Assisi (San Francesco), and Padua (Arena Chapel). Giotto also dabbled in architecture and sculpture. (Library of Congress)

when compared with other figures. People immediately in front of three-story buildings were half their height, as if actors before a stage backdrop. Scale was often ignored. For Byzantine-inspired artists, in the spiritual world a rectangular table-top splayed out away from the viewer (reverse perspective), whose earthly world was not to be the point of reference. This implied that the vanishing point was not in the picture frame, but in the viewer's own space. In a sense, the world of the viewer was the fiction.

In the 1420s and 1430s several Florentines concerned with giving geometric accuracy to naturalistic depictions began to change all this. The sculptor, goldsmith, and architect Filippo Brunelleschi started this process with two painted panels depicting Florence's Baptistery from inside the cathedral door and a view of two sides of Florence's town hall from a particular street corner. History tells us that they were both amazingly lifelike when positioned on site and seen properly. In constructing the first, Brunelleschi utilized one-point perspective, and in the second two-point, to give the receding walls the correct angles. Correct naturalistic depiction had to take the viewer's position and basic geometry into account.

Brunelleschi's friend Leonbattista Alberti was as impressed as his Florentine colleagues the artists Donatello and Masaccio. About 1435 Alberti wrote *On Painting*, in which he gave literary form to Brunelleschi's insights. To provide the illusion of depth, a painting should depict a floor (*pavimento*) that seems to be made of square paving tiles. This is widest directly in front of the viewer and geometrically recedes toward what we call a vanishing point. The outer edges of this form a triangle whose base is in the foreground, and is divided by receding lines into the number of rows of paving the artist chose. These lines run from the base to the apex in the distance. A second triangle with the same base but an apex shifted to the right or left of the vanishing point has the same number of lines from base to apex. Where these intersect the receding pavement lines the artist inserts horizontals that will accurately show the apparent diminishing size of the tiles as they recede from the viewer. By placing the heads of all figures at about the same level and their feet wherever one likes on the *pavimento*, the figures will assume the proper proportion to the frontmost figures.

Shortly after Brunelleschi's panels were painted, Masaccio created his masterpiece *The Trinity* (1425) in Florence's Santa Maria Novella. Because the viewer sees the composition from below, she would not see the pavement, so Masaccio created a coffered barrel vault ceiling that achieves the same effect of seeming to recede into the wall. Other artists quickly adopted these techniques for creating the illusion of three-dimensional space, including Brunelleschi's rival Lorenzo Ghiberti and his friend Donatello, both of whom applied them to bas-relief sculpture. Surviving drawings of painters Antonio Pisanello and Paolo Uccello display the linear geometry underlying compositions; and painters Domenico Veneziano and

Fra Angelico applied linear perspective in their works. It became so widespread and popular that some intellectuals called it the eighth liberal art. Painter Piero della Francesca penned *On Perspective for Painting* in the mid-1400s, in which he explored many ways in which it could be used, especially with three-dimensional objects. Images created on ceramics or with intarsia or pietre dure popped thanks to perspective. Printmakers used geometric perspective as well as chiaroscuro, or shading, to create three-dimensional effects; mapmakers projected perspective as bases for their views of cities; technical illustrators applied perspective and scale to machinery and other plans that provided a higher level of realism than previously achieved. Finally, theater-goers began to watch dramas unfold before increasingly lifelike stage backdrops, culminating, perhaps, in the architect Palladio's Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza (1585).

See also *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Painting: Media and Techniques; Pietre Dure and Intarsia; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; Sculpture; Theater for the Elite; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Gardens; Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Fortresses and Fortifications; *Religion and Beliefs*: Chapels; Churches; *Science and Technology*: Astronomy before Copernicus; Maps and Mapmaking; Technical Illustration

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PIETRE DURE AND INTARSIA

Intarsia, or marquetry, is the art of creating two-dimensional images out of variously colored and grained wood veneers that are cut into shapes and fitted together on a flat surface. Pietre dure—literally hard stones—is essentially the same kind of inlaid decorative work, but consists of thin slices of cut and polished colored stone.

Both techniques were used widely in Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, paralleling, in their turn, developments in painting, including perspective and the use of shading to model three-dimensional forms known as *chiaroscuro*. In both cases inlay artists could depend for their patterns on drawings from other two-dimensional artists such as painters. Work in stone was far the older technique. It was related to mosaic work, which constructed pictures out of small cubes of stone or gold foil-backed glass, and the even more similar art form known as *opus sectile* (cut work) or *Cosmati*, for the Italian master craftsmen who raised it to new heights in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Intarsia, rather, was inspired by Islamic woodwork and developed as a form of art in early fifteenth-century Florence. The Tuscan center was headquarters for both art forms: in 1472 Benedetto Dei counted 84 woodworking shops that also did inlay and 54 shops that specialized in decorative stonework.

Fourteenth-century intarsia began as geometric and floral decorations in parts of churches that featured woodwork or furniture, such as choir stalls, chapter rooms where monks or clergy gathered, and sacristies, in which priests prepared for Mass and stored vestments and liturgical objects. Artists from Siena worked at the cathedrals of Orvieto near Rome, Siena, Florence, and nearby Fiesole, as well as the Florentine Franciscan church of Santa Croce. A single panel from Orvieto is all that remains. Around 1430 Florentine artists, influenced by the perspective techniques of Brunelleschi, began expanding intarsia into pictorial narrative, cityscapes, and illusionistic depictions of furnishings such as cupboards and open drawers with their contents carelessly displayed. The Old Sacristy of Florence's cathedral was the site of the earliest large-scale perspectival intarsia campaign (1436–1445). Open cupboard doors were foreshortened and appeared angled appropriately to their height on the wall, as were the objects they revealed: books, musical instruments, candlesticks. Portraits of bishops, saints, and prophets constructed of walnut, poplar, black oak, pear, and maple looked down from fictive niches. Biblical scenes including the Annunciation, Nativity, and Presentation in the Temple display both a warm simplicity and subtlety of treatment as well as the limitations of the art form. By comparison with later sixteenth-century works, early masterpieces were somewhat blocky. Nonetheless, in 1474 the newly minted Duke of Urbino chose the medium to decorate his intimate studiolo (private studies) in both Urbino and Gubbio (now at the Metropolitan Museum in New York). Botticelli and other painters created the drawings the woodworkers used as patterns. Fake shelves and cupboards now held armor as well as prayer beads, musical instruments, early scientific instruments, and seemingly carelessly placed books.

Between 1484 and 1489, intarsist Pier Antonio degli Abbati completed projects in churches in Modena, Parma, Padua, and three in Vicenza. In Padua's Basilica Church the Canozi brothers created unique seatbacks for 90 choir stalls. Large

projects after 1500 featured greater detail and use of shading, stained wood, and highlights burned into the wood as artists tried to mimic painters, as at the Certosa in Naples in c. 1514 and Bergamo's Basilica (1524–1533). Woodworkers' shops also decorated furniture, large musical instruments, paneling, doors and shutters, and cupboards for high and even middle-class customers.

Medieval geometric Cosmatesque work of cut and polished colored stones decorated pavements, pulpits, and other flat surfaces of churches from Sicily to London. Pietre dure began as similar carved marble geometric inlaid decorations on the walls of Roman palazzi in the early 1500s. The Farnese Table (149" x 66"; 1568–1573) features a gorgeous centralized pattern of fleurs-de-lys and other forms in cream and gold surrounded by a deep green border. But marble is relatively soft and true pietre dure was saved for fancy vases. Florentine artists abandoned marble and applied the carefully jigsawed semi-precious hard stone to many surfaces, often incorporating gems, cameos, and even medallions into the intricate patterns of still lifes, landscapes, and other painterly compositions. Artists used a wide variety of stones with both pure and mixed shades providing a full palette of color: agate, granite, deep red porphyry, black onyx, deep blue lapis lazuli, purple amethyst, chalcedony, rock crystal, jasper, garnet, and basalt, and occasionally including pearl, mother-of-pearl, amber, ivory, ebony, and even petrified wood. Random variations in color tone, striping and veins of color, and imbedded grains allowed artists to work in textures and even chiaroscuro with amazing results. Gleaming "Florentine mosaic" decorated cabinets, tabletops, chests, altars, and smaller items such as bowls, vases, and pitchers. Florence's Duke Francesco I de' Medici established a ducal workshop specializing in pietre dure at the Casino di San Marco in the 1560s that standardized production techniques and created minor masterpieces for ducal palaces, churches, and gifts. In 1588, Duke Ferdinand I, a former cardinal stationed in Rome, moved the manufactory to the new Uffizi and hired carpenters, gilders, jewelers, gem-cutters, goldsmiths, pattern designers, and stone-cutters. Together they crafted Italy's masterpiece: the interior of the funerary Chapel of the Medici Princes at San Lorenzo church, whose interior gleams in semi-precious splendor.

See also Arts: Art, Courtly; Painters and Their Workshops; Perspective in the Visual Arts; Housing and Community: Palazzi; Religion and Beliefs: Chapels; Churches

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Poetry. *See Women Poets and Their Poetry*

PORTRAITS

A portrait is an image of someone that attempts to capture the way he or she actually appears. Classical Greek and Roman artists were experts at creating naturalistic or realistic images, an interest that disappeared during much of the Middle Ages. Part of what defined the Renaissance era was desire by artists and their patrons to have subjects depicted as they actually looked. Late medieval painters and sculptors in the Netherlands and Germany pioneered realistic portraiture, but Italians soon leapt ahead, inspired by the remains of their Roman forefathers and their own desire to be remembered.

Portraits appeared in many media: sculpture, drawing, painting, and metalwork. Realistic portraits might appear in groups with other portraits or fictive images of religious or historical figures. Portraits also morphed into historical or legendary figures: a Medici youth portrays one of the three magi in the family's chapel, a Medici mistress represents Venus, and Leonardo da Vinci becomes Plato in Raphael's *School of Athens*. Painters required models, and their fellow artists often filled the need. Family portraits depicted parents and children, and in large formats other relatives and even servants. When Ippolita Sforza moved in with her royal Neapolitan husband in 1465, she insisted on having her Milanese family portrayed in her new study for her "constant comfort and pleasure." In Mantua the ruling Gonzaga household at leisure decorates the walls of the ducal palace's Camera degli Sposi, though other rulers, such as Medici grand dukes, preferred to pose formally, showing off splendid attire and symbols of their power. Venetian aristocratic families

sometimes flank religious scenes such as a Madonna and Child, presenting a clear message of their devotion. Portraits of significant ancestors, a Classical Roman specialty, made a comeback as families linked their current successes with real or imagined past glories. Both republics and lordships produced portraits with increasing frequency and for a growing number of uses from the mid-fifteenth century.

Individual portraits were sculpted in wax, terra-cotta, bronze, cameos, and traditional marble. Portrait medals patterned after Roman coins were easily reproduced and handed out by rulers like modern business cards. For the first time since Antiquity larger-than-life bronze statues of rulers or famed generals on horseback snarled down into the *piazza* below. Painted likenesses of rulers and ruled alike appeared in books, on panels and canvases, and frescoed onto walls. While earlier works retained the traditional profile view, from the mid-fifteenth century, artists experimented with three-quarter views of the head and various positioning of the body. Patricia Rubin describes this as a shift from “description to encounter” with the viewer. Greater care was taken with setting, clothing, props, and attempts to display in the face a particular attitude or psychological state, what Leonardo called “motions of the soul.” These elements of individualism were valued by patrons and subjects as they sought to distinguish themselves from family members and social peers. Whether one was depicted as warm or aloof, active or passive, sensuous or distracted gave the portrait a depth of meaning beyond merely reminding the viewer of the sitter. Yet in general, Renaissance Italian portraits muted emotions such as joy, amusement, sorrow, or concern. While children might express feelings, adult sitters tended to the stoical, depriving viewers of obvious clues.

Portraits of women were rarer than those of males, and were often paired with the husband’s portrait. More privately, artists depicted men’s lovers, to be carried when men traveled or the pair lived apart. Leonardo even refers to such a portrait as an aphrodisiac that inflames the lover’s desire. What appear to be straightforward female portraits often contain subtle hints of sexuality. Provocative clothing, a glance or the shape of the mouth, a turn of the body, or even the presence of a sensuous small animal may indicate an aphrodisiac intent. For their parts, prostitutes were known to hang erotic portraits on their walls to help stimulate their customers. Renaissance aesthetics had to balance naturalistic and idealized beauty; sitters often wanted to look like themselves but better. A mirror reflected reality only for a moment and only to the subject herself; a portrait was forever. In vivid verbal images the poet Petrarch had celebrated the elements of feminine beauty, and painters could capture these and apply them to a subject’s otherwise undistinguished features.

Sixteenth-century portraitists moved in many directions. They placed their sitters in outdoor settings as well as indoor, posed their bodies in novel ways,

Portrait Medals

Influenced by humanist interests in Roman portraits and coins, rulers had bronze medals cast of themselves, military leaders, and even humanists, with appropriate symbols on the reverse. Wedding medals celebrated the couples on one face and depicted reminders of fidelity or love on the other. The earliest Renaissance-era medal celebrated Francesco Carrara's conquest of Padua (1390), with the next, Antonio Pisanello's commemoration of Emperor John VIII Paleologus at the Council of Florence, appearing only in 1439. Pisanello pioneered the form, working in Mantua for the Gonzaga and Ferrara, where Lionello d'Este struck no fewer than 10,000. Collected and exchanged, medals had a second master in Niccolò Fiorentino but declined as ruler portraits began to appear on coins (*testoni*).

and were far more likely to depict much of their form rather than just the face. Painters such as Titian specialized in capturing the “inner life” of subjects, which led him to reduce settings and clothing to masses of blurry neutral tones lest they distract. Artists experimented with light, using it to shape the portrait's psychological as well as aesthetic effect. Florentine mannerists wiped even subtle expressions from sitters' faces, leaving them blank slates onto which viewers could project their own interpretations. Official portraits, such as Bronzino's of Florence's Grand Duchess Eleanora of Toledo, did just this, giving the impression of aloofness and distance from the lowly viewer. In her portrait of 1545 her body is, encased in a massive gown depicted hyper-realistically: she and her family ruled Florence but were apart from it a political message clearly conveyed. Titian's 1536 *La Bella* is said to have been the first portrait purchased purely as a work of art: the Duke of Urbino wrote the artist urging him to complete “that portrait of that woman in the blue dress.”

See also: *Arts:* Antiquity, Cult of; Art, Courtly; Art Patronage; Daily Life in Art; Non-Europeans in Art; Sculpture; *Family and Gender:* Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; *Fashion and Appearance:* Art, Fashion in; *Housing and Community:* Palazzi; Villas; *Religion and Beliefs:* Saints and Their Cults; *Science and Technology:* Collecting and Collections

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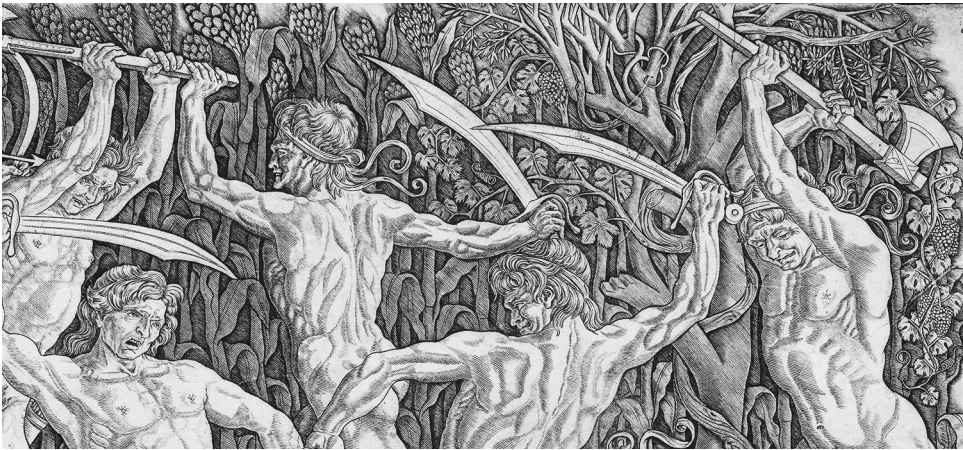
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PRINTS: WOODCUTS, ENGRAVINGS, AND ETCHINGS

Woodblock printing onto fabric or paper for wall decoration or other purposes that required repeating patterns was known by at least 1400. The color medium was applied to the raised surface of the carved wood block and carefully stamped onto the material by hand. Artistically carving the woodblock to produce an image for a book page or a single sheet evolved after Gutenberg's press came to Italy in the 1460s. Artists or artisans created drawings of the desired images, which were then transferred to the blocks by professional woodcarvers. The block itself might have text inscribed, or blocks of text might be added at the top, bottom, or sides of the image block at the press. Printed illustrations for books or single sheets could also be painted or tinted with color, adding to their value and aesthetic appeal. Engraving, which appeared at about the same time, emerged from the practice of decorating arms, armor, and other metal objects by incising patterns or images onto their surfaces. Well-trained engravers very carefully cut the desired pattern or image onto flat copper plates with sharp v-tipped steel burins of varying widths. Printing with the plates was essentially the reverse of woodblock printing: the ink was applied to the surface of the plate and into the grooves. The raised surface was carefully wiped clean. During printing the ink was drawn onto the paper's surface by capillary action, leaving far finer lines and detail than woodcut could. Etching entailed covering the copper plate with resin and using the burins to expose the copper rather than engrave it. Acid was then applied, etching the exposed copper surface in preparation for printing.

Preparing a plate by etching was rather more forgiving of errors, since resin could be reapplied over mistakes, faster, and less expensive than engraving. A given woodblock, however, could produce about four times as many copies as a copper plate, and both etchings and engravings tended to be smaller and more prized—and expensive—than similarly themed woodcuts. Engraving was early used for producing tarot cards, and among the first artists to use the medium were the painters Andrea Mantegna of Mantua and Pollaiuolo, whose “Battle of the



The Battle of the Nude Men (1465–1475) is an engraved study in active poses of nude men by the Florentine artist Antonio del Pollaiuolo (ca. 1431–1498). The muscular figures are paired to show both frontal and back or side views. Appealing to classical, homoerotic, and anatomical interests, such images were very popular. (GraphicaArtis/Getty Images)

Naked Men” (1465–75) sold so well that the initial plate needed refreshing and two woodcut editions appeared. The Florentine painter Botticelli designed and marketed a large two-plate engraved *Assumption* (82.6 x 56 cm), but his project to produce an illustrated printed version of Dante’s *Divine Comedy* (1481) with the engraver Baccio Baldini remained uncompleted. Most book illustrations remained cheaper and hardier woodcuts. The earliest Italian illustrated printed book was the 1467 *Meditations on the Life of Christ*, which contained 30 woodcuts. Other early illustrated editions included the Classical Roman Vegetius’s *On Military Matters*, the textbook *Aesop’s Fables*, and the sermons of the Dominican preacher Girolamo Savonarola, which went through 23 editions.

Just as printing created an entirely new audience for the book, the single-sheet print exposed new audiences to art, antiquities, news, cityscapes, and world rulers. Common folk decorated their walls and even furniture with the printmakers’ art, from devotional images of saints or the Crucifixion to calendars and print versions of Michelangelo’s masterpieces. People who would never enter the Vatican apartments, Florentine villas, or Venetian palazzi learned from prints of the masterpieces they contained, both Classical and contemporary. Master engravers worked on commission producing versions of major new artworks, such as Niccolò della Casa’s 11 plates of Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel. Italian artists studied engravings of Roman statues and ruins for Classical imagery, and the prints of German artists Albrecht Altdorfer and Albrecht Dürer, who worked for a time in Venice, to understand better the media’s potentials. Painters such as Giorgio Vasari collected prints of their contemporaries’ works in large scrapbooks,

and others had single-sheet prints sewn into new books when they had them bound. Prints circulated far and wide and provided models for tailors, sculptors, and architects, and patterns for silk weavers, embroiderers, and jewelers. Of a more technical nature were almanacs, maps, navigational charts, and dress pattern-books. Of a more popular nature were song sheets and other handouts distributed by charlatans, street entertainers, and even preachers. Visitors to Rome bought maps of churches and at shrines pictures or a single-sheet *Life* of the featured saint. *Bandi* were government posters hung in predictable places around the city informing the populace of new official policies or actions. These announced taxes, travel restrictions, sumptuary laws, restraints on trade, and health notices such as the presence of plague and emergency regulations related to it.

Some sheets were distributed free or sold cheaply by preachers or street entertainers. Print shops marketed more valuable engravings as well as broadsheets with newsworthy subjects, and the ephemeral material in between was hawked by street vendors, tavern keepers, roving salesmen, barber-surgeons, and innkeepers. In an age whose only other mass media was gossip, the print played a vital role in communication.

See also: *Arts*: Antiquity, Cult of; Dante in Popular Culture; Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; Painters and Their Workshops; Sculpture; *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; Retail Selling; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Recreation and Social Customs*: News; Songs and Singing, Popular; Street Entertainment; Taverns and Inns; Theater, Popular; *Religion and Beliefs*: Christian Art in the Home; Crucifix; Mary, Cult of; Pilgrims and Shrines; Preachers and Preaching; Saints and Their Cults; *Science and Technology*: Botany and Botanical Illustration; Collecting and Collections; Technical Illustration

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SCULPTURE

Writing around 1450, Leonbattista Alberti of Florence described sculptors as those who carved or modeled, or crafted metal. The carvers worked in wood, stone, or ivory; modelers in stucco, clay, or wax; and most fine metalworkers in bronze and gold. Sculptures ranged from huge equestrian monuments with generals or rulers placed in piazzas to life-size marble saints in chapels and tiny bronze *plaquettes* worn as decoration. Large and complex works in bronze or marble tended to be commemorative of great men in the forms of memorials or tombs. Crucifixes and smaller sculpted religious narrative scenes invited devotion in chapels and in homes. Civic heroes and battles were also commemorated with sculpted relief panels on the walls of town halls and other public structures, while panels celebrating Christian traditions or narrating biblical passages graced church pulpits, altars, and singing lofts.

The vast majority of sculpted objects were by unknown craftsmen and in styles that were matters of local tradition. Wealthier and more discerning patrons, however, were concerned with helping create works in the latest style, especially if these were to be displayed in public. In the later 1300s the style was still Gothic, with human figures realistic but stiff and often idealized. After 1400, Florentine sculptors sought and found greater naturalism and realism in the study of Greek and Roman models and in new tools such as perspective, which were used on reliefs. Geniuses such as Donatello and Lorenzo Ghiberti established the Renaissance style in public works such as Florence's gilded bronze Baptistery doors and statues for the guild church of Or San Michele. These influenced the styles of sculpted objects large and small, as both customers and patrons demanded objects in the Classical (*antica*) manner. In major churches Venetian sculptors installed multilevel wall tombs composed of sarcophagi, effigies, and figures in complex Classical architectural frameworks. The High Renaissance style of sixteenth-century monumental sculpture is dominated by Michelangelo's work, especially in Rome. Even so, his most famous work, the youthful, biblical *David* (1504), came to symbolize the Florentine Republic and stood outside its city hall, as a copy does today. In the midst of wars and oppression, sixteenth-century Florentine sculptors possessed of very high skill moved away from Renaissance aesthetic values such as symmetry and Classical stoicism into a fashionable style known as mannerism. Their "styl-ish" pieces took liberties with human forms, often creating intricate ensembles of two or more intertwined figures. In Giambologna's originally unnamed *Rape of the Sabine Woman* (1583), the nude Roman wraps his arms around the victim who struggles as he lifts her from the ground. Her arm reaches to heaven as she struggles, her father helpless on the ground beneath. There is no front to the work: the viewer has to move around its spiral form to take it all in. With other public sculptures it was placed in the Loggia in the Piazza Signoria.

Civic and ecclesiastical statuary enriched the aesthetic experiences of all who encountered it, and brought glory to the city and its religious life. Smaller-scale sculptures also enhanced the daily lives of Italians, rural, urban, rich, and poor. Because these works could be made of many types of materials, from wood to gold, even relatively poor folk could afford to purchase a painted terra-cotta or carved and painted wooden crucifix or statue of a saint offered at markets, by traveling merchants, or by the local craftsmen themselves. Some religious subjects with domestic themes, such as the Madonna and Child, were especially suited to the household. Inexpensive unglazed terra-cotta lamps spilled by the hundreds from cheap molds in amusing or even pornographic forms and all manner of household items were given shape by creative artisans. Less creative artists copied in miniature famous works by Donatello or Michelangelo, allowing locals, visitors, and pilgrims alike the opportunity of owning a tiny masterpiece in molded stucco or clay. In this age of therapeutic saints there was also a ready market for molded wax *ex voto* images. When one prayed to a particular saint and thereafter recovered from an illness or injury, she often visited the saint's shrine or church and left behind a wax version of the body part or of the saint as testimony to the holy advocate's powers.

The better off could afford works in bronze and other richer materials. But if the impetus was the same, the quality and style were usually rather higher. Statuettes, candlesticks, lamps, bells, and doorknockers were cast in forms ranging from the graceful to the grotesque. The wealthier displayed their good taste with functional objects cast into the forms of little Classical satyrs, nymphs, and harpies. Carved and molded copies of antiquities, reliefs as well as statuettes, graced tables and shelves. Some of these that survive are true masterpieces, since artists working on a small and private scale could experiment with elements such as emotions and gestures unfit for larger-scale public art. Miniature bronze reliefs inspired by both Classical coins and large reliefs appeared as round medals and rectangular plaquettes. Both originated around 1440 in northern Italian courts, and each could be held in the palm of one's hand. Medals were usually semi-official pieces featuring rulers or commemorating an important event. The plaquette was cast on only one side, and often featured Classical subjects such as Hercules or Homeric heroes. Others contained religious images and were believed by some to have prophylactic or healing powers as talismans. Owners hung plaquettes on walls or from bed curtains, wore them as pendants or attached to a hat or outerwear, or collected them as some did coins. With medals and plaquettes goldsmiths and engravers also became sculptors. High-end domestic religious sculpture included reliefs and statuettes in bronze, gilded bronze—or gold—and marble. Finally, in the wealthiest homes the Classical Roman portrait bust, usually of the late family head, made a return in marble or bronze.

See also: *Arts*: Antiquity, Cult of; Art, Courtly; Art, Sacred; Art Patronage; Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; Portraits; *Family and Gender*: Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; *Fashion and Appearance*: Gems and Jewelry; *Food and Drink*: Sugar and Confectioned Sweets; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and Piazzas; Furnishing the House; Palazzi; Villas *Politics and Warfare*: Art, Civic; *Religion and Beliefs*: Chapels; Christian Art in the Home; Churches; Crucifix; Mary, Cult of; Memorials *Ex Voto*; Saints and Their Cults; *Science and Technology*: Metallurgy

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THEATER FOR THE ELITE

Theater for the elite was unlike *commedia dell'arte*, which evolved from street performance and was meant to attract the common person, and unlike Christian sacred representation, with roots in medieval liturgical drama and biblical reenactments. Associated with humanists, courts, literary academies, and universities, it developed from fifteenth-century revivals of original Latin dramas and translations. Humanists and poets began penning their own versions, and recognizable genres emerged, including the rural or rustic comedy, erudite (learned) comedy, pastoral, and lovers' stories (from the 1530s). Performances were meant for educated and elite audiences, often taking place in restricted spaces such as villas and palazzi.

In 1427, 12 plays of Classical Roman comic playwright Plautus were discovered. These were edited, translated, printed, and, in the later 1400s, performed at courts, universities, and houses of humanists. Duke Ercole I of Ferrara expanded the repertoire to include ancient Roman comedian Terence and tragedian Seneca, all in translation. Beginning in 1486 with Plautus's *Menaechmi*, his court provided increasingly elaborate staging, especially when a performance was part of wedding ceremonies that included music, banquets, and jousts. At such festivities, scenes were separated by interludes, which featured music and dance. These *intermedii* grew in sophistication; with characters, staging, and even plots of their own they evolved late in the sixteenth century into the musical theater form known as opera.

Early performance space was temporary, essentially a stage platform, a raised dais for the court dignitaries, and bleachers for other spectators in a large palace hall. At Mantua during Carnival in 1513, players presented Terence's comedy *The Andrians* under the garden loggia behind the palace. Italy's first permanent theater structure was Ferrara's Sala delle Commedie (1504). Dedicated performance space soon followed in some major cities. Newly built or remodeled late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Roman palazzi often included dedicated theatrical space. The Vatican's Belvedere and papal Villa Madama and Villa Giulia, as well as the Farnesina, were designed with amphitheater layouts.

Early fifteenth-century humanist and educator Pier Paolo Vergerio wrote five-act medieval style works for chorus to shape students' morals through rhythmic prose. Meanwhile, other humanists created new works in Classical style: Leon Battista Alberti created his Terentian *Philodoxus* (1426) in 20 scenes; Leonardo Bruni, Florentine chancellor, penned the Plautian *Poliscene*; and future pope Eneo Silvio Piccolomini wrote his 18-scene *Chrysis* around Classical Roman characters and situations. Niccolò Machiavelli's *Mandragola* was performed first in 1526 and quickly became a hit not only in Florence but also in Ferrara, Venice, Faenza, and Rome. Students at universities in Pavia, Padua, Naples, and Rome wrote and produced plays in both Latin and Italian. The Companies of Shoes, social clubs of young Venetian noblemen, sponsored and acted in theatrical performances of all types, which appeared in spaces from small piazze to the Hall of the Great Council. While they commissioned some works, the Companies were also responsible for reviving Classical works of Plautus and Terence in Venice.

Academies of humanists and literary types also contributed to cities' theater scenes. In 1486 the Roman Academy, with the aid of cardinals and classicists at the Sapienza (university), revived Roman stoic Seneca's *Hippolytus*. A few years later they staged Plautus's comedy *Asinaria* in a temporary theater on the Quirinal Hill in Rome. Productions came from the pens of Siena's Intronati and Ingannati academicians from the 1530s. Their *La Pellegrina* (1560s) was chosen as entertainment for the lavish Medici wedding of 1589. After seizing Siena, Cosimo I had a theater built in the Palazzo Pubblico above the prisons in what had been the Great Hall of the Council. This was perhaps as much a statement on Siena's new lack of liberty as a gift to the theater-going elite. His own Uffizi complex in Florence featured a large theater (1589) with a raised dais for the ducal party, footlights, and "self-lighting" torches for illumination. With the discovery in 1486 of Book Ten of the Roman Vitruvius' work on architecture, the art of set design was revived and applied. Painted scenic backdrops now used principles of linear perspective to create the illusion of depth on stage—especially street scenes—famously made permanent on the stage of the newly built (1585) Olympic Theater in Vicenza by Andrea Palladio and Vincenzo Scamozzi.

Jewish Entertainers?

Mantua's later sixteenth-century Gonzaga court was noted for its Università Israelitica, a company of Jewish dramatists, technicians, and performers, including actors, singers, and dancers. Led by playwright and poet Leone de'Sommi, the group staged works in private palazzi and at court, and may have been granted use of a public hall. Sommi was clearly a master of his art, as displayed in sophisticated discussions of stagecraft in his *Dialogues*. Command performances included Duke Vincenzo's birthdays and Carnival festivities. Of course, their activities had to cease on Fridays before sundown initiated the Sabbath, and completely on High Holy Days.

Little is known of the earliest performers, though at courts they may have been a mix of courtiers and traveling players, both men and women. Troupes of traveling *buffoni* had their own, growing repertoires and may have performed new or newly translated works on demand. Perhaps the most famous was I Gelosi. Known for commedia dell'arte, they also performed for Ferrara's Alfonso II, premiering Torquato Tasso's pastoral *Aminta* in 1573. By the later 1500s some courts supported their own repertory companies whose professional players performed for all manner of productions, from street theater and religious dramas to wedding entertainments for popes and kings. But plays were not only for performance. G. G. Trissino's *Sofonisba* was written in 1515 but not performed until 1562. Nonetheless, between 1524 and 1620 it was printed 23 times. It seems that "performance" of dramatic works often meant interpretive readings in public or small settings rather than full staging.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Courtly; Art Patronage; Music at Court; Women and the Arts; *Economics and Work:* Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender:* Education of Children; *Fashion and Appearance:* Court, Fashion at; Social Status and Clothing; *Housing and Community:* Gardens; Palazzi; Villas; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Carnival; Civic Festivals; Noble Pursuits; Theater, Popular; Theater, Religious; Weddings; *Science and Technology:* Academies; Machines and Engines; *Primary Document:* The Renaissance Stage: Sebastiano Serlio. "A Venetian Architect on Designing Stage Scenery." *Second Book of Architecture* (1545)

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WOMEN AND THE ARTS

The Renaissance era has long been noted for contributions to the arts in their many forms. These included painting and drawing, sculpture, theater, architecture and landscaping, storytelling and poetry, metal crafts, costume, ceramics, glassware, music, and dance. In most fields, patrons commissioned a piece, the creator produced it, and usually many more used or enjoyed it. Since most skilled creators were male, women's roles were usually restricted to patronage and appreciation. Yet both were vital to the arts. The patron was sometimes considered the true creator of a work, since he or she gave it purpose, or its "final cause" in Aristotle's analysis. Patrons also provided vital elements, such as performers and a stage; musicians to sing or play a composition; property on and materials with which to build a palazzo or garden; the celebration to be decorated for; or the wall or room to be painted. When art was shared and appreciated, it spawned new works sought by new patrons who favored either tradition or innovation. Women played key roles in the creation and appreciation of Renaissance-era art, but they also did more.

Some women painted, drew, and wrote music, poetry, plays, short stories, letter collections, and religious literature. Lavinia Fontana, an artist's daughter from Bologna, painted an altarpiece for St. Paul's in Rome; Prosperzia Rossi of Bologna was one of the era's few female sculptors; and Michelangelo and Vasari admired the paintings of Cremona's Sofonisba Anguissola. Women also sang and played instruments, recited verses, acted on stage, and danced both for pleasure

and for audiences. At court, noblewomen wore brilliant costumes that displayed their taste and wealth, ate from fine maiolica ware, and sat for portraits in many media. At their own expense these women supported painters, composers and musicians, actors, poets, tailors, and dance masters. Beginning in the later 1400s noblewomen such as Isabella d'Este collected artistic works purely for the sake of owning and displaying them.

Women at court provided later fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century writers their target audience. These women tended to be literate and valued the written and spoken vernacular. Support was rewarded with dedications in published works: of 160 *canzonieri*, collections of poetry printed between 1480 and 1530, many carried such recognition of female patronage. Women also inspired, criticized, and argued with male writers at court; and

women authors in turn learned from the likes of Ariosto and Pietro Bembo. Milan's duchess Bianca Maria Visconti did the purchasing for her husband the condottiere Francesco Sforza. She commissioned not only tapestries, manuscripts, and embroideries, but also directed construction of the city walls and a family villa.

Women in nunneries were often far from embracing poverty. In addition to using their own resources to decorate their spaces, many had benefactors among relatives or nobles or patricians with ties to the community. Often community leaders decided on the programs of frescoes or altarpieces. Nuns also sang new compositions, both sacred and profane, and were known to perform dramatic works, if only for their own enjoyment.

From the 1540s the Italian stage began to feature actresses, a huge break with Western tradition. One of the first recorded was Vincenza Armani, but within



Lavinia Fontana (1552–1615) was a Bolognese painter who was daughter and wife of local painters whose fame she easily eclipsed. About 100 works of hers are documented, many from her stay in Rome where she even painted a papal portrait. From a painted self-portrait (1590), original oil on panel. (Library of Congress)

two decades most troupes included women players. Best known and most praised was Isabella Andreini. Daughter of a laborer from Padua, she wrote for and acted with I Gelosi, a troupe that played from Rome to Paris. She performed in her own *Mirtilla*, and published collections of poetry in 1601 and of letters posthumously. Female poets and authors of published letters were far from unknown, at least during the sixteenth century, and their printed works found eager readers among both women and men. Some circles of women poets or religious authors helped women find their voices and create works of very high quality even for the Renaissance era.

Last wills contained instructions for gifts to friends, relatives, and churches, including art, that had spiritual value for the giver. Art in wills included fulfillments of religious vows, final requests to saints for intercession, and commemorations such as chapels or tomb sculpture. A woman could direct her own art patronage through her will, and as executor a widow her husband's final commissions.

And finally, of course, women appear as subjects in countless works of painting and sculpture, from portraits and saint's images to biblical, mythological, and historical scenes.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Courtly; Art, Sacred; Art Patronage; Daily Life in Art; Music at Court; Musical Instruments; Portraits; Theater for the Elite; Women Poets and Their Poetry; *Family and Gender*: Families, Noble and Patrician; Widows; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Women, Letters, and Letter Writing; *Religion and Beliefs*: Chapels; Christian Art in the Home; Nuns and Nunneries

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WOMEN POETS AND THEIR POETRY

Poetry played a major role in Renaissance-era life. Street poets entertained audiences at markets, festivals, and during Carnival. Literary poets performed for elites in palazzi and at villas. Composers turned religious poems to music that was sung by confraternities and congregations in churches, while the madrigal crossed from poetry to secular song. Florence, Perugia, Siena, and other cities paid poetic secretaries to write official letters and other documents in Latin verse, while gifted critics used Latin and vernacular poems to inform, comment, and even undermine government policies and actions. Humanists studied verse of long-dead Romans such as Ovid, Catullus, and Vergil, while students of the Tuscan dialect—led by Pietro Bembo—championed and displayed its richness and flexibility. Fourteenth-century Tuscans Dante and Petrarch provided models of vernacular love poetry, and after 1460 printers circulated it all.

Prior to about 1530 poetry was a male preserve, though there were religious works by a few women such as Florentines Lucrezia Tornabuoni de' Medici and Antonia Pulci. Il Magnifico's mother penned five verse translations of biblical stories of John the Baptist, the biblical Tobit, and heroic Hebrew women Judith and Esther. She used Dante's terza rima and Petrarch's sonnet forms, and contributed nine popular hymns of praise (*laude*) sung to secular tunes. Antonia Gianotti Pulci's husband was a poet; when he died, she became a nun known for her poetic religious plays or *sacre rappresentazioni*.

The sixteenth century saw female poets come into their own. Some were wives, widows, or daughters of literary men; others courtesans or nuns. Some became correspondents or members of poetic circles that accepted, validated, and honed each other's work. Northern Italian courts were increasingly shaped by strong women and their patronage of female poets. For two decades women with court associations held sway, but after 1550 women of lower status found their voices. After

1530 publishers recognized that there was profit to be made from collections and anthologies of women's poetry.

The Renaissance Legacy of Francesco Petrarch (1304–1372)

His impact was wide and deep. Important Venetian poet Pietro Bembo published a pocket-sized version of *Canzoniere* (*Poems*, 1501), insisting that Petrarch's Italian was its only pure form. *Triumphs*, Petrarch's allegory describing a parade of floats on themes such as love and death, provided models for festival decorations, frescoes, and tarot cards, and writers modeled his rhetorical stances against scholasticism, physicians, astrology, and bad Latin. Twenty-four of 25 madrigals in Jacques Arcadelt's 1559 *Musica nova* (New music) are Petrarchan. Women sought to become the Laura celebrated by his poems, and some wrote their own Petrarchan poetry even using masculine voice. The Inquisition banned four of his poems, and poet Gerolamo Malipiero rewrote many, replacing profane with spiritual love (1536).

Roman noblewoman and marchioness of Pescara Vittoria Colonna was widowed at 35 and became center of a circle of Italian religious reformers and poets. Charismatic and scholarly, she exchanged sonnets with poets Ludovico Ariosto, Pietro Aretino, Michelangelo, and Pietro Bembo, who published one in his 1535 anthology. A decade later she published *Spiritual Poems* (1546), a self-fashioning Petrarchan collection that reflected her need as a widow for consolation from grief and regret, as well as a religiosity that was dangerously Protestant-leaning. Daughter of minor Neapolitan nobility, Petrarchan poetess Laura Terracina received encouragement from Vittoria and from fellow members of Naples's Academy of the Unknowing. In 1548 she published *Poetry*, which was reprinted five times by 1600 and followed by eight additional volumes of her work. Her *Discorso*—reprinted 15 times—was a poetic epic in the chivalric genre that played off Ariosto's very popular *Orlando Furioso*. A feminist who nonetheless disparaged her own work, Laura praised that of other women, including Florentine Laura Battiferra. Laura was the wife of Florentine sculptor Bartolomeo Ammanati and was in the circle of the Medici court. She wrote in praise of her husband and of the court, and in her later years translated the seven penitential psalms into Tuscan. She helped found a literary academy that championed Tuscan and published her *First Book of Tuscan Works* as a tribute to Eleanora of Toledo, wife of Cosimo I. Considered by some today the era's greatest female poet, Gaspara Stampa was a well-educated member of Padua's society and academies. Never married, two torrid affairs provided the emotion-drenched material for 311 poems collected in her posthumous *Poetry*.

Other sixteenth-century female poets of note include courtesan Veronica Franco; Lucca's Chiara Matraini; Roman-Florentine courtesan (?) Tullia d'Aragona; Venetian actress Isabella Andreini; Siennese academician Laudomia Forteguerri; and Città di Castello's spiritual poet Francesca Turina.

Women's poetry was best enjoyed in popular collections and anthologies, since decorum—and much of their content—precluded their public recitations. In 1559 Ludovico Domenichi, senior editor for Venice's famed Gioliti Press, published the first poetic anthology featuring all female authors: *Diverse Poems of Some Very Noble and Most Virtuous Women*. Despite the title, he published in Lucca to avoid Roman Church authorities who had just burned some 10,000 to 12,000 volumes of seemingly subversive poetry. His 53 authors were grouped as if their poems were responding to one another: art imitating life.

See also: *Arts*: Dante in Popular Culture; Music at Court; Women and the Arts; *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender*: Education of Children; Widows; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Reading; Theater, Religious; Women, Letters, and Letter Writing; *Religion and Beliefs*: Women Mystics; *Science and Technology*: Academies

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ECONOMICS AND WORK



INTRODUCTION

Economics is essentially the study of how people acquire the goods and services they need to survive and thrive. Much of this is bound up with trade, especially the exchange of one's labor for necessities and luxuries. Italian communities between about 1350 and 1600 were sophisticated societies within which economic exchanges were carried out in rather complex and efficient ways. Feudal relationships had been largely pushed out by commercial relationships, except in the south, and even that was beginning to change. Taxes replaced feudal dues, and rents in cash replaced many payments in kind. Money was created in cities all across the peninsula, and it circulated widely. Accounting practices emerged in the fourteenth century for keeping track of exchanges, as did new financial instruments from documents that worked like checks to insurance on ships' cargoes. The introduction of paper in Italy just before 1300 made handwritten recordkeeping practical and inexpensive, as the later use of the printing press changed forever the relationship of the author to his or her text and audience. The political and economic organizations known as guilds had long played important roles in directing civic governments, but the Renaissance era saw these governments take ever bolder steps in regulating and ordering cities' economic lives.

But economies were ultimately based in the countryside. This was not the manorial or feudal land of northern Europe, but the *contado* directed by urban landowners who exploited its resources for commercial purposes. In the Kingdoms of Sicily and Naples, arguably the least commercially developed Italian regions, the two great rural products were wheat and sheep's wool. Both of these were exported north to cities from Siena to Venice to Torino. Closer to home, these cities and others carved out spheres of influence and then of conquest as they sought to control the flow of food and other rural products, from draft animals and fish to dyestuffs



Though *The Money Changer* (1675) by Jan van Haensbergen is Dutch and post-Renaissance era, it captures the intensity of the Italian banker of the previous century as well as the Spartan nature of his home or office. His wife's presence is a reminder of the important roles that spouses often played in the business world. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

urban areas. The financial capital and credit were here, as were the concentrated raw materials, the expertise, skilled labor, the markets, and much of the demand. That which was produced for export made its way to Italian urban port cities, from which it was carried in the bottoms of Italian or foreign ships that hailed from cities as far afield as the Baltic and Black Seas. The same ships that took out Italian goods imported cargoes of all sorts, from Chinese porcelain to English wool, Polish wheat, and Sumatran spices. These goods were distributed to high-end retail shops in Rome, weavers' looms in Genoa, Venetian public granaries, and Neapolitan apothecaries' shops. Of course, ultimately they graced cardinals' tables, clothed lawyers, fed plague-stricken glass workers, and soothed the Neapolitan viceroy's pregnant servant. The world grew rather smaller between 1350 and 1600.

Contemporary sources on economics and work are varied, complex, and rarely translated into English. The Renaissance era in Italy is far better documented than Italy before the fourteenth century or the rest of Europe at the time. Personal

and timber for palazzi and ships. And when plague cut down a city's population, it depended on the urban migration of *contadini* to fill the ranks of laborers and servants. Even those who remained village bound were affected by the urban centers as they paid their rents and taxes, suckled the infants of patrician women, marketed their surplus in city streets, participated in putting-out phases of certain manufacturing processes, and sought credit from urban lenders and the services of urban notaries.

If the hinterlands provided the fuel, the Italian cities were the engines of the economy. From the Arsenale shipbuilding works in Venice to gunsmiths and weavers in Milan, the segment of the economy that produced manufactured—literally hand-made—goods was located in

records include diaries, *ricordanze* (personal or household record books), letters, household account books, estate records, probate records (wills and inventories of estates), and contracts for commissions, rents, apprenticeships and servitude, and other matters. These are regularly used by scholars for their information on purchases, sales, networks, stores of wealth, dowries, prices, wages, time spent away on business, and anxieties about the markets. Some matters such as wills, probate inventories, and contracts were routinely recorded by notaries, many of whose books can be found in archives. Business records of purchases, sales, credit given and received, changes in prices, wages paid, rents paid or received, profit margins, supply problems, changes in taste, and other aspects of demand are somewhat scarcer, since while families continued on and notaries had to file their books, business records usually disappeared with the business. The reason that Francesco Datini of Prato, who died in 1410, figures so prominently in discussions of the era's economy is that his mountain of business records was preserved in his palazzo, sealed away until discovered in 1870. Other types of sources include guild records of regulations, infractions and judicial decisions, and other business. Other courts left accounts of criminal activity: abuses of workers, apprentices, or servants; fraud; counterfeiting; and property damage. Civic records document patterns of taxation and the income they provided, as well as expenditures for goods and services of all kinds. Many institutions such as hospitals, monasteries, and rulers' courts left records of income (e.g., gifts, rents and other dues, and payments for services) as well as payments for purchases, wages, and salaries. Less obvious sources include preachers' sermons condemning everything from usury to new French fashions; novelle, poetry, and other literary works that shed light on working conditions, buyers' and sellers' attitudes, and a host of related matters. Finally, visual and tangible materials include contemporary paintings, drawings, and other illustrations of shops, machines, ships, workers, professionals, and markets, while actual remains from the period range from the watermarked paper of account books to coins, tools, and textiles.

ACCOUNTING

Renaissance-era Italians encountered the need for financial recordkeeping at every turn. Larger households needed records of dowries promised, servants' salaries owed, loans receivable from deadbeat in-laws, expenses paid for weddings and funerals, and debts owed to artists for work completed. The parish, guild, confraternity, monastery, commune, and court treasurer had to keep track of income and expenses, especially if credit was involved. Italy led Europe in developing

techniques for keeping relatively sophisticated records in part because of the advanced stage of its commercial life. It was the world of business, and especially banking, that established the foundations of modern accounting.

The volume and complexity of business transactions grew greater as businesses stretched across Italy and Europe. Over just a six-year period from 1367, an early partnership of the international merchant Francesco Datini recorded some 10,000 transactions involving hundreds of clients. That averages to about 4.5 per day every day. His need for accurate and accessible records was clear. As his businesses expanded, he established branches in Majorca, Bruges, Milan, Barcelona, Avignon, Genoa, and Florence, and each branch had to keep its books the way he did in Prato. Datini's 10,000 early transactions were only recorded once, as either credits or debits, a method known as single-entry bookkeeping. Twenty-five years later he had fully adopted a new system. In fact, Italian bankers and merchants developed a virtually uniform system of recordkeeping around the concept of the double entry: each transaction was recorded twice, since the business both received something and lost something. Each transaction was both a debit and a credit to a business's accounts.

Cash sales seem not to have been recorded, especially by smaller retail companies. Therefore, let us assume a sale of shoes on credit. The debt to the shop was recorded immediately in a *ricordanza* book that noted who bought the shoes, the price, the quality or grade of the product, and the date. If paid quickly, the entry was simply lined through or marked *pagato* (paid) to indicate the debt had been paid. If not, it was eventually posted to a *memoriale* book that had debts owed by customers located in the front half and debts owed to suppliers in the back half. From there it was more formally recorded in the company's ledger. In the *memoriale* or ledger a second line beneath the first indicated when and how the transaction was completed: who paid how much when. In fact, small businesses usually used only a ledger for credit accounts, including goods sold and purchases made from suppliers, in which the business became the debtor. Larger businesses with multiple employees, large volumes of business, many credit transactions, and often long repayment lags relied on *ricordanze* and *memoriali* as precursors to the ledger.

Accounts were kept in Italian, and until well into the fifteenth century usually using Roman numerals for monetary amounts in *lire*, *soldi*, and *denari*. Personal names being as spotty as they often were, retail businessmen had to be as specific as they could when recording those of customers or suppliers. "Giovanni" was not enough. Giovanni had to be "son of" someone, "from" somewhere, "the carpenter who lives next to the prison," "the one-eyed," or "Ser Giovanni" (denoting a notary). "Brother Giovanni" had to be "the Franciscan" or belong to a particular monastery, be "the young" or "the old." A woman could not simply be Giovanna, but "wife of Pietro the painter," "widow of Roberto from Parma," or Mona Giovanna Frescobaldi. As the Datini archive in Prato reveals, the books themselves

were purchased from paper-sellers ready-bound with hard covers. Each would have a different title inscribed on the cover, such as *Memoriale C*, and the first page was marked with a cross and headed “For God and Profit.” A second line might mention the specific partnership involved or other purpose to which the book was being put. Apart from *ricordanze*, *memoriali*, and ledgers, separate books might have been kept by a business for cash, profit distributions to partners, goods received and delivered, salaries due and paid, and debtors. One apothecary left a book of debtors with 106 names outstanding. A separate book might also be kept for large accounts: the duke’s court, for example, or a hospital or monastery. Because a single transaction might appear in several books, easy cross-referencing was essential. When all transactions on a page were completed, the businessman penned a diagonal line through it.

Larger cities with active commercial sectors hired teachers to prepare boys in basic arithmetic and, increasingly in the fifteenth century, young men in bookkeeping. This helped spread the use of Arabic numerals for entering monetary amounts and kept Italian bookkeeping practices from fragmenting into regional or personal variations. Probably the most famous of these teachers was Luca Pacioli, a mathematician working in Venice and Milan who was so highly reputed that Leonardo da Vinci made a note in 1495 to “learn multiplication from the root” from his colleague Pacioli (Gleeson-White, 49). At the same moment Pacioli had just completed his encyclopedia on mathematics, which included 24,000 words on bookkeeping.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Apprentices; Banks and Banking; Credit and Loans; Retail Selling; Taxes and Public Finance; Trade, Seaborne; *Family and Gender*: Education of Children; Names, Personal and Family; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; Crime and Punishments

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APOTHECARIES

Like modern pharmacists, apothecaries—from *apotheka*, meaning “storehouse”—prepared and sold medicines that physicians prescribed for patients. Known as *speziali*, they also sold cooking spices, which were believed to have medicinal as well as culinary properties. But there was more: painters bought pigments, children candies, women perfumes, mourners candles for funeral processions, and banquet hosts sugar sculptures and distilled liqueurs. In the sixteenth century Florence’s Giglio shop processed nearly two tons of sugar annually. Some had their own gardens for fresh herbs, and others displayed collections of oddities from antiquities to pickled animal fetuses. Part warehouse, part store, and part workshop, these were meeting places for doctors and patients, spice merchants and cooks, gossips,



Apothecaries in Venice and other cities publicly prepared the complex drug *theriac* in annual, outdoor, and public festivals to ensure and advertise quality. Officials inspected the ingredients and judged the final products. This woodcut is from *The Book of the Craft of Distilling*, published by Hieronymus Braunschweig in Strasbourg, ca. 1500. (INTERFOTO/Alamy Stock Photo)

self-proclaimed drug makers looking for new retail outlets, and old men looking for a game of chess or a political debate.

A heavy counter separated owner from customers and a door the shop from the workroom and storage in back. Shelves behind the counter displayed scores of labeled ceramic and glass jars. Giglio featured 46 meters of shelving holding some 200 large jars, 132 containers for fluids and syrups, and 40 boxes of pills, herbs, and other dry goods. A shop in Messina, Sicily, ordered from a potter 238 majolica jars, which are displayed today in Roccavaldina. All this was in addition to cases of drawers and large cupboards, mortars and pestles for grinding, scales and measures, religious images, presses for extracting juices and oils, recipe books, account ledgers, distillation equipment, chairs, and benches. Smaller shops with limited wares or specialties opened directly onto the street for better exposure and quicker service. Customers brought their own containers for their purchases, though shops provided glasses or ampoules for liquids; jars for creams, ointments, or syrups; small boxes for pills, and folded paper envelopes for powders.

Florence's 1427 tax census lists 113 *speziali*, though only 60 appear in 1480's census. Given all of the necessary capital, one might think most of it stayed in families; yet only 17 of the 60 were related to the 113. In the 1570s, Florence had 66 apothecary shops and Venice 71. Thirty more appeared in Venice by 1617. Venetian pharmacists and their shops were viewed as Europe's finest, thanks to the city's long history of trade with the spice-producing East. Europe's medicinal spices arrived from Asia through Venice; and foreign merchants, specialty buyers, scientists, students, and physicians mingled with local specialists in its marketplaces. Its university in nearby Padua claimed fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe's premier medical school and earliest medicinal botanical garden. Venice was also the heart of Italy's printing industry, and its shops contained numerous books on related subjects from cooking to surgery, including works such as Prospero Borgarucci's 900-page *Manual for Apothecaries* (1567).

Most cities had a guild for apothecaries or joined them to another more or less related occupation. Florence united them with physicians, and Bologna with grocers, candle-makers, and brewers. Though lacking a guild, Venetian apprentices spent five years learning the craft, while studying the pharmacopeia (the catalog of standard medical preparations), making deliveries, candles, and candies, and grinding everything from seed pods to deep blue lapis lazuli from Afghanistan. Three more years of working with and for a practicing professional was required before one could open a shop, though some spent even more assisting various masters to gain the secrets that made an apothecary stand out. Venetian apothecaries were divided into medicinal specialists and all others, and were licensed and overseen directly by the Giustizia Vecchia (Old Justice) magistracy (and from 1520s to 1548 by the Health Magistracy). In 1565 they formed the Collegio degli

Speziali, putting them on the same organizational level as physicians. Yet, across Italy apothecaries became subordinated to civic medical authorities that appeared in the midst of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century plague epidemics. Physicians, too, had gained organizational strength and power over all aspects of sixteenth-century medical practice from midwives to charlatans, including apothecaries. In some cities doctors invested in and worked directly with specific apothecaries, while in others laws banned such partnerships.

Apothecaries served institutions as well as individuals. Ducal and royal courts, monasteries and nunneries, orphanages and hospitals had their favorites. Meanwhile, some monasteries and convents competed with apothecaries supplying wholesale or retail herbs and medicines, especially to the poor. Because knowledge of Latin was necessary for reading catalogs, recipe books, and manuals, women were usually absent—or banned, as in Rome—from guild lists. Venice was different, and in 1569 counted five women among its 85 registered *speziali*. These were generally directly associated with a male apothecary, as was Camilla Erculiani of Padua, whose father was a spice merchant and two successive husbands were apothecaries. Her Latin allowed her to pen *Letters on Natural Philosophy* (1584).

See also: *Arts: Painters and Their Workshops; Economics and Work: Guilds; Retail Selling; Family and Gender: Health and Illness; Fashion and Appearance: Cosmetics; Food and Drink: Drugs; Foreign Foods; Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices; Sugar and Confectioned Sweets; Housing and Community: Hospitals and Orphanages; Physicians; Science and Technology: Alchemy; Collecting and Collections; Medical Education; Pharmacopeias and Materia Medica; Secrets, Books of*

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APPRENTICES

The boy growing up in rural Italy had few choices before him, and was likely to remain an agricultural worker. From the time he could walk he followed adults around, absorbing what they did, how they did it, and the results. Urban fathers may have wanted their sons to follow in their trade, though members of lower classes often had higher aspirations. Many larger Italian cities had schools where boys could learn to read and write in Italian, and to manipulate numbers. Some boys learned these skills at home, either from parents or from tutors. By age nine or ten artisanal-class boys, and fortunate lower-class lads, were ready to begin vocational education as an apprentice, or assistant to a guild master (both "boss" and "teacher") in the field chosen by the boy or his father or guardian. The boy might stay with his father and family, or join another master's shop and household for a number of years. Apprenticeship was the mechanism by which the guild system in Italy provided help to current masters and brought up the next generation of skilled guildsmen.

Guild regulations were usually quite careful in laying out rules for accepting new apprentices, providing for their welfare and education, and setting expectations for workers who were essentially children. In Genoa, masters and guardians or fathers signed detailed notarized contracts. A study of 8,400 of these between 1450 and 1540 revealed the types of terms expected and their variations among different occupations. The child joined the family of the master, who usually took full responsibility for his safety, health, and well-being. Parents or guardian provided a stipend to help with the child's upkeep, at least during the early years when the boy could make little more than a small economic contribution to the host family. Many boys followed in their father's craft or occupation, though with different masters. Over time this may have served to homogenize occupational practices as young men acquired and applied similar skill sets.

Florentine guilds, on the other hand, had far different expectations of masters. A boy did not as a rule join the master's family, but stayed in his birth home or elsewhere. Written contracts seem to have been rare, and boys seem to have moved

more freely among masters than was the case elsewhere. In some ways they were caught between fathers who had sent them away and masters who did not reintegrate them into family life. This may help explain why Renaissance-era Florence had unique issues with its young men. In the early 1400s the government replied to the perceived trend toward homosexual activity by subsidizing brothels; later in the century the Church developed special confraternities for young men and boys; in the 1490s reforming friar Savonarola used such boys and teens as minions to harass the unholy; and in the sixteenth century Cosimo de' Medici used youth groups of *potenze* (bullies) to replace older, established social groups.

Florentine boys tended to change occupational apprenticeships more frequently than those in other, more rigid systems, and fewer followed in their father's craft or trade. According to tax censuses (*catasti*), in 1427 there were 113 apothecaries in Florence and in 1480 only 60. But of the 60 only 17 were related to the 113 of 50 years earlier. These druggists had big investments in inventory, and elsewhere this meant sons would often take over. This was true in Florence of some occupations, such as those requiring heavy capital investment such as kilns or foundries. Goldthwaite points out that in many cities painters and other artists created small occupational dynasties across generations, but not Florence. Andrea Verrocchio's father was a brickmaker, and the father of Verrocchio's prize student, Leonardo, was a notary in Vinci. Botticelli's father was a tanner and his brothers a banker and a goldsmith. In this case the sons achieved what many families sought: movement up the social ladder. Goldthwaite suggests that this ability to operate within the guild system with relatively little interference stems in part from the very important role that guilds played in the city's political life. Since they controlled the government—*pace* the Medicis—they could afford to be lax in apprentice oversight. Such laxity may also have contributed to the Florentine libertarian streak that one searches for in vain among Romans, Venetians, or Neapolitans. Finally, this relative fluidity may account for the versatility and freedom of development one finds in Florentine art, business, and other fields.

To protect apprentices, from 1291 Venice required that all of them be registered with the state, which itself oversaw the guilds. Assuming that the apprentice had learned what he needed to strike out on his own, when his contract was up, he became a journeyman who could now work as a full assistant for one or a series of employers. Some never left this stage to become masters in their own right.

While formal apprenticeship was unique to the guild systems, the concept of learning by doing from “masters” was really pervasive. Young girls who were sent out to toil in households as servants were simultaneously acquiring the skills and attitudes of the housewives they were expected to become. Before there were seminaries, boys interested in becoming priests often served local priests as deacons for five years while learning clerical skills. Noble boys and girls learned from parents,

courtiers, and their social betters how to serve with decorum. Noble Venetian youth of at least 20 paid a fee to become “bowmen of the quarterdeck,” skilled crossbowmen who learned sailing and sea-craft on the job. So important was this entrée to maritime and commercial life that the Senate mandated ships have four (around 1400) and eight (1483) of these apprentices on board.

See also Arts: Painters and Their Workshops; *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; Book Printing and Sales; Clothmaking; Guilds; Notaries; *Family and Gender*: Childhood; Education of Children; Families, Laboring Class; *Fashion and Appearance*: Tailors and Seamstresses; *Housing and Community*: Barbers and Surgeons; Hospitals and Orphanages; Physicians

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BANKS AND BANKING

The original, medieval “bank” was the bench or table behind which sat the man with a strongbox full of cash—some local some foreign. Though he probably had an office—perhaps in his house—where he stored papers, pawned goods, and more cash, the bench came out on festival and market days, and at fairs where buyers and sellers from distant towns gathered. Foreigners exchanged their coins for local ones, at a commission, of course, and merchants who accepted foreign money traded it in for the local sort, also at a commission. By the fourteenth century men with letters of credit appeared at the bench. The banker exchanged this formal promise to pay, or evidence of payment having been made to a partner at the foreigner’s home, for local cash, minus a commission. Foreigners selling goods might also deposit funds with the banker, saving them the trouble and risk of carrying the cash back home. The banker might then lend these funds to a local manufacturer who chose to deliver goods on credit but who needed working capital—cash for wages, rent, raw materials, or taxes—to provide a bridge until the buyer paid up. The Renaissance-era banker performed all of these functions locally, but as Italian trade increased across Europe and the Mediterranean the number and complexity of bankers’ functions increased. In Lucca, “foreigner” increasingly referred to English merchants rather than those from nearby Pisa, and successful bankers

developed networks of branch offices that radiated out from Florence, Siena, and Venice.

Early international banks developed along with the international wool trade carried out from Siena and Florence. Powerful families from these rival cities vied for the privilege of loaning their accumulated cash to the papacy and the kings of Naples and England. When, on the very eve of the Renaissance, England's King Edward III decided he could not repay his Florentine lenders, the Bardi and Peruzzi companies, the Italian city's economy crashed. Nonetheless, Italians continued to compete for Edward's business.

Perhaps the most famous of the international banking families was the Medici of Florence. They spent 60 years near the top of the list and used their profits in extraordinary ways to promote Florentine arts and learning, and themselves. Viero de' Medici and his father worked for the Baronci family firm from 1348, and Viero became a partner in 1352. He was enriched by forming additional partnerships and by 1370 ran a leading concern. He had a major branch in Rome and others in Bruges, Genoa, Venice, and Zara in Dalmatia. In 1385, Giovanni, the son of Viero's cousin Bicci, who was a small-time lender in the Mugello valley near Florence, joined the firm, contributing his new wife's dowry of 1,500 florins. Giovanni relocated to Rome as executive partner. In 1393 he bought out Viero and returned to Florence four years later. This marked the beginning of the Medici bank, which existed until 1494. Though in no way typical, its fortunes illustrate international banking's possibilities and pitfalls. Giovanni opened a branch in Naples in 1400 and one in Venice in 1402. He reaped 75% of the bank's profits between 1397 and 1420, during which he averaged 6,644 florins per year.

Giovanni's son Cosimo took over in 1420, and up to 1433 (his exile) raised annual family profits to 11,648 florins. Over the following 15 years under Cosimo family gains averaged 19,386 florins. Business was good, indeed, but Cosimo's revenge against his political persecutors also played its part in eliminating competition. In the 1420s Florence hosted 72 banks, but by the 1470s the number fell to 33; six disappeared in the 1460s alone as the economy worsened. Giovanni had established wool factories (1402, 1408), and Cosimo added silk to the portfolio (1433). Cosimo also multiplied branches abroad: Geneva (1426), Basle (1433), Ancona (1436), Bruges (1439), Pisa (1442), London and Avignon (1446), and Milan (1452). Each branch had four to eight employees, including the cashier, notary, scribe, messengers, and shop boys. One ledger recorded all normal transactions and a second, secret one, contained confidential dealings as well as wages and other business matters. Cosimo's successes faded as his son Piero appointed inferior managers and Piero's son Lorenzo (Il Magnifico) essentially ignored the family business. Poor management, bad loans and investments, internal squabbling, and wars involving France, Burgundy, and England brought the Medici bank

to its end. The branch in London closed in 1472, and from 1478 to 1481 so did the branches in Avignon, Bruges, London, Milan, and Venice, as did that in Pisa in 1489. When Piero de' Medici fled Florence in 1494, he took bank funds with him.

Monti di pietà

By the 1460s, Christian leaders had grown resentful of Jewish pawnbrokers and pressed for a Christian alternative. *Monti di pietà*—"piles of mercy"—were semi-public pawn operations funded by depositors earning 5% annually. Borrowers left items on pawn, usually for short periods. Between 1462 and 1510, cities established 70 *monti* across Italy. Florence's monte began in 1495 but foundered until the 1530s. By the 1540s it had some 50,000 pawned items in storage; by the later 1560s, 171,000 items—of which 90% were eventually redeemed—for a total of 370,150 florins in loans. Supporting this activity were 2,794 deposits totaling nearly 1,000,000 florins.

Smaller enterprises operating locally or regionally continued to meet people's needs, but the Italian Wars (1494–1559) made huge demands on Italian funds and large-scale lending very risky. Meanwhile, northern firms such as Augsburg's Fuggers moved south in the wakes of Imperial armies. Combined with the sixteenth-century economic shift to Spain, England, and the Netherlands, Italy devolved into a relative backwater. Venice in 1499 had only four banks, one of which went bankrupt causing two others to undergo runs, during which depositors demanded immediate cash. The fourth, that of Alvise Pisani, had a brilliant and courageous leader who promised cash, borrowed it, and came through. Unlike the Florentines, Venetian banks predominantly served to pay on depositors' accounts—pay their bills—rather than loan out money. In Florence several welfare institutions, including the orphanage of the Innocenti and the Santa Maria Nuova Hospital in the mid-1400s, had begun taking deposits and making small loans in competition with smaller banks. In 1564, at the Innocenti 293 common folk had deposits totaling 45,000 florins.

See also: *Arts:* Art Patronage; *Economics and Work:* Accounting; Coins, Coinage, and Money; Credit and Loans; Guilds; Trade, Seaborne; *Family and Gender:* Dowries; *Housing and Community:* Jewish Communities

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BOOK PRINTING AND SALES

By assembling moveable type, a modified cider press, relatively cheap paper, and sticky, oil-based ink, Johannes Gutenberg revolutionized communication. Presses appeared in Italian cities from 1465, when the first was opened in Subiaco, then in Rome (1467), Venice (1469), Ferrara, Florence, Milan, Bologna, and Naples (all 1471), and Padua, Parma, and Verona (1472). By 1500, 80 Italian towns had presses, though many quickly failed and closed. Renaissance-era Italian printers produced around 77,000 editions (64,500 in the sixteenth century) of books both grand and simple, modern and Classical, popular and esoteric, utilitarian and poetic, in Italian, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Spanish, Slavonic, and Arabic.

The publisher—who might be the printer, author, or an entrepreneur—selected and provided the text, bought necessary paper, made arrangements with the press (pay a set fee or share profits), chose and obtained the type font(s), and decided how many copies to print. Setting up a print shop was expensive. Ample space was needed for press or presses, for setting and proofreading pages, storing paper and other materials, hanging newly printed pages to dry, and keeping completed books. Presses were complicated and expensive and required many sets of type in multiple sizes and fonts. Eight of Venice's first 12 printers failed, as did all of Florence's. Between 1469 and 1500 across Italy 233 shops started and failed. Threats to success included undercapitalization (too little cash or credit), fire, flood, fraud, inexperienced or bad management, market changes, poor marketing, and cheap competition in a world without copyright. Some printers traveled: the earliest pioneers were Germans and none of Venice's printers were native Venetians. Heinrich of Cologne set up shop at various times in Bologna, Brescia, Lucca, Modena, Milan, Siena, and Urbino. Venice was known for its polygraphs, men who served as writers, editors, translators, proofreaders, copy editors, and as often as not, plagiarizers.

Sixteenth-century Venice hosted more than 1,000 printers and publishers. They produced some 27,298 editions of books and countless broadsides, prints, and pamphlets. This was three times as many as Roman printers and five times Florentine output. Inventories and catalogs of print shops and booksellers provide some

idea of the supply of and the demand for books. The Venice-based Giunti Company had branches in Rome, Siena, Naples, Palermo, and Messina, and expanded to Lyon, France, and Spanish Burgos and Salamanca. In 1557 the Burgos branch claimed 15,837 copies of 1,579 editions in stock. Their late sixteenth-century Florentine branch was the city's largest, and its catalog advertised 13,685 titles as being on hand.

Booksellers' shops featured walk-in showrooms with tables, lecterns, and shelves covered with books, usually unbound. Books were retailed as groups or sheaves of pages without covers, which were procured by the shop at the customer's request. In 1484 the Dei Libri shop in Bologna displayed over 400 printed books and 45 manuscripts, and had hundreds of other copies stored upstairs. All told it held over 2,700 books, many of them university texts. By comparison, in 1537 the Milan warehouse of Niccolò Gorgonzola contained 80,450 copies of 205 editions. Owners of both shops sold their own published works, Gorgonzola's comprising about 25% of his inventory. Since both blank and printed paper had to remain dry and had to be protected from vermin, large Venetian companies used spaces in monasteries and large houses for warehousing stock.

Retailing books—especially popular or devotional texts—occurred not only in shops but also at street stalls, in churches, at shrines and markets, and, especially at the wholesale level, at local or regional fairs. Major foreign fairs for book dealers were in Lyon and Frankfurt. Venice held fairs at Christmas and a 15-day affair around Ascension (late spring). Local Dominicans rented out stalls at La Quercia near Viterbo in May and September; in the fall Recanati hosted a fair aimed at booksellers and pilgrims en route to Loreto; and in the south Lanciano conducted Italy's most important book fair beginning in 1477. The city closed shops and rented spaces in loggias to vendors.

Censorship

Church and state had always sought to control heretical or subversive writings. With printing, this became easier, due to the known locations of presses, but more difficult because so many copies of offensive works could circulate. Civic authorities tried to control political speech, while bishops and inquisitors attempted to monitor religious writings. In 1559 the Roman Church adopted the *Index of Forbidden Books*, a list expanded and edited and overseen by the Inquisition. Many objectionable books underwent minor changes, others were extensively purged, and a growing number was simply banned. Savvy authors had their works previewed by authorities, who could grant an imprimatur—it may be printed—if deemed harmless.

Devotional and religious titles by women and men generally headed lists of stock or sales volume. From 1465 to 1501 this included 35% of Bologna's output, 46% of Venice's, and 70% of that of Florentine shops. In 1491 a single shop in Parma stocked 579 Books of Psalms. This trend was reinforced during the years of Catholic resurgence after the Council of Trent (1545–1563). Some of these books, especially in Venice and before stricter censorship from the 1540s, were Protestant or otherwise “heretical” texts sold both as propaganda and to resident Protestants. Popular poets included Dante (31 editions to 1500), Petrarch (93), and Boccaccio (81). Aesop's *Fables* in Latin remained a constant best seller (as a basic reading textbook), as did the Latin grammar text called the *Donato* (300 copies in the Parma shop). In university cities textbooks sold well, in Rome tourists and pilgrims purchased guidebooks and books about saints' lives, and sheet music flew from Venetian shelves.

Hebrew-language presses also flourished in Venice from 1515 to 1553, when they were shut down, and then from 1560s under the Inquisition's close monitoring. Jews were forbidden from publishing, though they could write, edit, and print books. The German Christian Daniel Blomberg published some 200 titles, including a complete Talmud, between 1516 and 1548. Another hundred titles in Hebrew came from two publishers between 1545 and 1553. Venice's Paganini press produced the first printed Qur'an in Arabic (1537–1538), a venture that found few buyers of the error-ridden edition.

See also *Arts*: Dante in Popular Culture; Novella; Painting: Media and Techniques; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; Women Poets and Their Poetry; *Economics and Work*: Credit and Loans; Retail Selling; *Family and Gender*: Education of Children; Last Wills and Testaments; *Fashion and Appearance*: Art, Fashion in; *Food and Drink*: Literature of Food and Cooking; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Calendars: Sacred and Profane; Music and Dance in Popular Culture; News; Pornography and Erotica; Reading; Songs and Singing, Popular; *Religion and Beliefs*: Bible; Christian Art in the Home; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Mary, Cult of; Pilgrims and Shrines; Preachers and Preaching; Prophecy and Apocalypticism; Protestantism; Saints and Their Cults; *Science and Technology*: Anatomy and Dissection; Astrology; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Libraries; Maps and Mapmaking; Medical Education; Plague Treatises and Consilia; Printing; Technical Illustration; Universities

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CLOTH TRADE

Silks, woolens, cottons, and linens were among the products Italians most often bought and sold. While some rural folk may have found it more convenient and cheaper to weave their own homespun cloth for their families, most regions of Italy had access to markets where cloth could be purchased at reasonable prices. Even inmates of urban institutions wore clothing made from inexpensive but commercially made textiles. Italians had long manufactured cloth commercially, with centers of fine cloth production in Florence, Milan, and Siena at the beginning of the Renaissance era. The Black Death and repeated plagues slackened demand, so production shifted to finer wools and, slowly, silks for export outside Italy. By the sixteenth century, new centers of production and distribution emerged, including Venice and Genoa. At the same time, northern European and Turkish production had provided real competition in a market that was growing wider geographically yet more integrated.

Though many studies of the cloth trade focus on the brisk international trade in high-end woolens and silks, most cloth was produced to serve local markets. In both cases, cloth producers rarely sold directly to the final users, unless the product was a special order or the buyer was a royal court or other single large-volume consumer. Some did run their own retail shops in major cities, but guild regulations often made this difficult. In general, cloth manufacturers sold their products wholesale either in Italy or abroad. Annual fairs all over Italy featured producers' cloth purchased by wholesalers who brought it home for resale or consignment to retail cloth sellers. Retail merchants, then, provided the final users with the material, grade, and color they desired. Over the sixteenth century, Florence consistently hosted some 100 woolen fabric shops, perhaps 152 in a 1561 census. There was no sector of pre-tailored, off-the-shelf clothing, though tailors no doubt spent time away from commissions to sew standard-sized items such as *camicie*, the ubiquitous, tunic, or shift-like undergarments of both men and women. For more visible apparel, the customer brought his or her choice of fabric to the tailor.

Silk thread was produced in many regions of Italy, including Abruzzi, Calabria, the Marches, Romagna, Sicily, Tuscany, and the Veneto. Because local, this was inexpensive but useful only for cheaper taffetas, velours, satins, and velvets, or blending with other fibers. For high-end brocades and damasks, imported raw silk was needed. Italian silk fabrics outcompeted eastern Mediterranean products and found ready markets in Constantinople/Istanbul, Damascus, and Tripoli. They were in high demand at cathedrals and courts throughout Europe, with major purchasers in Paris, Antwerp, London, and Bruges. Popularity was based not only on general quality of the fabric and dyes, but also of the weaves that borrowed or imitated Chinese or Iranian patterns of fantastic beasts or flowers in bloom. Silk fabrics varied widely in price depending on how they were prepared, so local sellers of silk textiles had a widely ranging clientele.

Since wool clothmaking and sales played a huge part in the Florentine economy, between 1350 and 1400 foreign wholesale buyers who visited the city were given a special tour of shops selling Florentine wool cloths. Guides pointed out the unfinished cathedral, the guildhall, and other sights, and led buyers down the major streets along which shops were located. Potential customers had two weeks within which to make deals. In the end, buyer and sellers were joined by a guild-provided broker who helped hammer out the final deal. During the same period, the Datini wool firms centered in Florence were shipping finished wool to their branches in cities such as Bruges, Genoa, Valencia, Ibiza, and Barcelona. One large shipment originally destined for Valencia had part left there, the remainder delivered to North Africa where more was sold, and the last portion dropped in Majorca. In Venice, another Datini market, cloth wholesaling took place around the Rialto, the city's commercial heart. From the 1480s Florentine weavers began processing a newer type of Castilian wool that produced a lighter and finer fabric than the Abruzzi Italian fibers from Naples. The resulting *rascia* cloth became one of the mainstays of Florentine trade, with ready customers in both the Near East and northern Europe. As Venetian production swamped the Turkish world due to better distribution networks than Florentines had, *rascia* became ever more popular at the fairs in Castile and Lyons and in the developing market in Antwerp. One element of its popularity was that it took very well the dyes producing a fine black color, and black had become the color of the day.

Francesco di Marco Datini da Prato (1335–1410)

Orphaned in the Black Death, with his inheritance Datini became a successful merchant in papal Avignon. Marrying a Florentine, he returned to Prato, near Florence, and established a network of business partnerships from Bruges and London to Venice and Barcelona. Trading mostly in cloth, he bought and sold just about anything, and spent a few years as a banker. He

died childless, leaving his enormous fortune to his foundation for children, headquartered in his Prato home. Today, Palazzo Datini also houses his unparalleled archive: 125,549 commercial and 10,000 personal letters from 267 places and scores of business and household account books.

In 1377, Bologna reported 4,000 people working in cotton production; a few decades later Venice had 5,000 to 6,000, and around 1450 Milan's industry employed 6,000, including 2,000 weavers. Cotton always had a ready local market, which was important after 1455, when Turkish supplies supplanted Italian products in the Near East. Cotton was often blended with other fibers to produce cloth types such as bombazine, which was made of linen and cotton and used for mattresses, tablecloths, and bedcovers, or *sciamiti*, a blend of silk and cotton that, when napped, was used for drapes, canopies, and upholstery. Even with limited Near Eastern demand, northern European markets made high Italian production levels worthwhile. Unlike wool, cotton could not be grown commercially north of the Alps.

See also: *Arts: Daily Life in Art; Economics and Work: Clothmaking; Fashion and Appearance: Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Dyes and Dyestuffs; Fabrics, Domestic; Fabrics, Imported; Social Status and Clothing; Sumptuary Laws*

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CLOTHMAKING

Silks

Silk was strictly an import item in Italy until the later Middle Ages. By the beginning of the Renaissance era, however, Lucca was Europe's center of silk production, followed by Venice and Florence. Later fourteenth-century upheavals

dispersed Lucchesi silk workers, and the fifteenth century saw the industry planted in Ferrara, Genoa, Modena, Naples, Perugia, Siena, and Milan. Within 30 years Milan had 300 silk weavers and 15% of its population worked in the silk industry; it was also Genoa's largest employer, and grew into the late sixteenth century. Tuscan production more than doubled in this century's final quarter: in 1567 tiny Pescia alone sold 1,654 pounds of raw silk to a single buyer, and by 1600 Florentine firms were purchasing a total of 170,000 pounds annually.

Silk was derived from the cocoons of worms that fed on mulberry trees or bushes. Eggs were laid out in the sun in May or June, and the worms were fed dry mulberry leaves as often as every half hour. The completed cocoon was steamed or boiled to kill the worm and soften the filaments. These were teased out and wound onto spools by reelers; spinners then wound and twisted four or five filaments into a thread of even thickness. Water wheels often powered "throwing" machines that did this work. Different fabrics required varieties of thread thickness and evenness. More steaming and boiling cleaned and further tightened the threads. Some went to a goldbeater or trained nuns who very carefully encased them in foil or very thin wire of gold or silver. Most was woven into textiles, the apprenticeship for which in Venice lasted eight years. Weavers specialized because silk was often mixed with other materials—such as wool and linen—and silk itself was the basis for a wide range of fabrics, including satins, velvets (13 distinct types), and brocades. In 1493 Venice had some 500 silk guild masters; in Genoa in 1573 alone 193 new masters joined its silk guild. Women handled the early stages of silk production, but weaving and dyeing remained in male hands. Dyeing silk cloth could be tricky business, and the Venetian state conducted careful tests of novel New World dye-stuffs such as cochineal before allowing their use.

Cotton

Cotton is a vegetable fiber, essentially seed hair grown by plants of the *Gossypium* genus. These require high seasonal temperatures, rainfall of 40 inches or more, and six to eight months' growing time. This meant Italian cloth-makers had to import cotton from places such as Egypt, Armenia, Damascus, and Cyprus. Cotton's quality was directly related to the length of the natural fibers, from a half inch to two inches. Production began with separating the fibers from the seeds, though most imported cotton was processed at least this far. Fiber bolls were beaten or treated with a vibrating bow that opened them up and began separating individual fibers. Skilled urban men or women carried this out between two and five times. Cleaned of sand, the fibers were then carded or raked with two parallel spiked boards to straighten the fibers, which were then twisted into thick thread. Drawing these out and twisting them into longer and thicker yarn was accomplished by rural women

in their homes, usually using a spinning wheel. Also contracted out was warping, which attached standardized parallel individual yarn lengths to a weaver's loom frame. A trained male weaver then wove the weft, the perpendicular threads that interlocked with the warp and, if desired, created the cloth's patterns. After bleaching with wood ash and lime, and then sun-drying for 8 to 16 weeks, either the yarn or the woven cloth was dyed. The dyed cloth was washed to even the color and then dried for several weeks before being napped or sheared if it was to be a brushed or smooth fine fabric.

The fifteenth century seems to have been the heyday of cotton production, when Milan had some 2,000 weavers and another 4,000 cotton workers, and Venice had perhaps 5,000 to 6,000 weavers. The sixteenth century saw production and export plummet, so that following a Venetian warehouse fire in 1530 the guild simply dissolved.

Wool

Renaissance-era Italian wool had many sources, including England, Spain, and the Neapolitan Kingdom. Quality depended on length of the fleece fibers (staple), the breed of sheep, and where on the body the wool originated (the more exposed the worse). Once sheared the wool was washed several times to remove dirt and body oils (lanolin). Long staple fibers were straightened and aligned with long-toothed combs, while short-stapled wool was carded using spiked brush-like tools. Short-staple remained separated but balled up and unaligned, waiting for the spinner to tease out and twist threads more or less tightly as directed, depositing them on the wheel's spindle. There were many types and qualities of wool weave, from light to heavy, rough to finely finished, or mixed with other fibers. Either the yarn or the finished cloth could be dyed, a process that could take several weeks. Though wool export sustained many Italian civic economies early in the Renaissance era, by the later sixteenth century northern European competition greatly undermined Italy's wool economy.

Linen

Like cotton, linen is made of vegetable fibers. Flax grew readily along river banks, and most linen was produced in the countryside for local use. The woody stems of the flax plant are made of long fibers that line up end-to-end, and have a natural strength and luster. Difficult to dye, linen may retain its brown to gray color or be bleached in the sun. The stalks were combed to remove leaves and separate fibers, and then set in water or the open air to rot. This separated the inner from outer fibers, but could not last too long or the useful fibers would weaken. Beating

the moist fibers further loosened and separated them, and a final combing straightened and aligned the fibers while removing any residual woody material. As with other fibers, the material was teased and spun to make thread for weaving. Weavers were also largely rural, with only a couple of dozen calling Florence home in the later 1400s. While linen was usually used for utilitarian purposes, including towels, bedclothes, and undergarments, carefully bleached and finished cloth was stitched or embroidered by nuns and used on church altars or sold as luxury items.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work*: Cloth Trade; Imported Goods, Sources of; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Dyes and Dyestuffs; Fabrics, Domestic; Fabrics, Imported; Social Status and Clothing; Sumptuary Laws

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COINS, COINAGE, AND MONEY

By the Renaissance era, Italy's commercial economy was based upon money. International bankers and merchants, popes and bishops, lay lords, small farmers, guildsmen, artists, mercenary soldiers, and beggars all relied on cash or accounts expressed in monetary terms. Dowries, bequests in wills, wages, rents, wholesale and retail prices, gifts to the Church, fines, loans, debts, alms, and fees for service were matters of money promised, owed, paid, or collected. Minting money had originally been an Imperial monopoly, but many Italian authorities had acquired the right by the 1350s. Actual cash was in coin form, either silver or gold or some mix of precious and base metals. The Carolingians (750–c. 950) had adopted and passed along a variation on the Classical Roman monetary system, and Italian cities and states adapted it. Each minted a variety of coins whose value was expected

to reflect their metal content, which could fluctuate unpredictably. International merchants and money-changers had to keep abreast of such changes for literally dozens of cities and non-Italian states. In addition, certain monetary values were strictly for accounting purposes (money of account) and were not the face value of actual minted coins. This landscape was confusing and shifting, and required a sharp mind to navigate it.

The Carolingian and related monetary systems were based upon one real and two imagined silver coins: the real silver penny, denarius, or denaro; the solidus, soldo, or shilling; and the pound, libra, or lira. A pound of silver yielded 240 denarii, and 12 denarii amounted to a soldo; 20 soldi constituted a lira. Though Charlemagne and later emperors minted the gold *augustale*, Italian mints produced gold coins only from 1252, when Florence began minting the gold florin and Genoa the *genovino* (later the *ducat* or florin); Venice followed in 1284 with its gold *ducat*. Each of these weighed approximately 3.55 grams, a standard that needed to be maintained so that foreign trade partners would readily accept the coins. Silver coins, on the other hand, were generally used locally, so their purity was less an issue. The value of both silver and gold fluctuated with supply, demand, and other economic factors. In general, silver dropped in value relative to gold (nominal debasement); and silver coins dropped even more as they were diluted with copper or other base metals, a process called physical debasement. The florin was set in 1252 at the value of one pound of silver (*lira*), but by the 1450s the florin was worth between 4 and 5 *lire* and a half-century later 7 or more *lire*. The gold *ducat*, also adopted by Milan and Rome, followed a similar pattern, so that by 1600 the Venetian *ducat* was worth 10 *lire*. Briefly, silver coinage lost its value relative to gold, so that those with florins could buy more silver coins—and goods—over time. Conversely, poorer people who had silver coins saw their value drop in the long run. Since the value of a florin or *ducat* in *lire* could rise or fall even in a matter of weeks, long-term contracts often not only stated monetary amounts in florins or *ducats* but also specified the current value of the gold coin in *lire-soldi-denari*. When the parties settled up, this original amount would be due.

Silver coinage varied over time and among the major city-states. Where the *denaro* had long been the only silver coin, it disappeared as its value fell. The *quattrino*, or four-denari coin, was about as small as any Renaissance-era coin got (though fourteenth-century Siena used the *denaro*). They were made of copper with enough silver to make them appear dull silver, an alloy called *billon*. At various times Venice minted a silver *soldino* worth 12 denari, a two-soldo *gazzeta*, a *grosso* worth 32 denari and a half-*grosso*, and a ten-soldo *marcello*. The first silver *lira* came from Venice in 1472. Since the coin displayed a realistic image of the doge for the first time, it was nicknamed a *testone*, from *testa* (“head”). Milan, Savoy, and Genoa followed with silver *testoni* weighing half again as much as Venice’s.

In the sixteenth century, governments minted large silver scudi (“shields”), influenced by the French écu and Spanish escudo, which were circulating thanks to the Italian Wars. Other foreign coins once limited to border areas or banks included the Tyrolian guldiner, Bohemian thaler, and Spanish pieces of eight. By the 1550s Habsburg Milan hosted around 40 different types of coins. In Florence, Duke Alessandro introduced the gold scudo in 1533, and in 1537 Duke Cosimo had all gold coins melted down, to be replaced by his new scudi. He was making the point that Florence’s coinage was really *his* coinage: in 1539 he introduced the silver Cosimo, a half-testone worth 1 lira.

Insulting Coinage

The right to mint coins was a privilege medieval emperors granted to cities. Coins such as Florentine florins or Venetian ducats displayed patriotic images. When Florence and Pisa went to war, they mocked each other by openly counterfeiting the other’s coinage outside the defenders’ city walls. In May 1363, Florentines minted a full run of Pisan coins; months later victorious Pisa retaliated by minting “Florentine” florins featuring the Pisan Virgin Mary and eagle, which held Florence’s lion (Marzocco) in its talons. Ultimate victory went to Florence, whose St. John trod on a rabbit and carried the chains guarding conquered Porto Pisano.

Many problems dogged Italian coins and their use. Foreign governments and counterfeiters created fakes—especially florins and ducats—that undermined the value of authentic pieces. The penalty was usually death. Cities underwent periods when coins were simply scarce, despite their importance to internal trade. In Florence the mint created coins when individuals brought in silver or gold to be melted down and returned as coins. When this supply dropped, circulating coinage could drop as well, especially as fairly pure silver coins were removed from the market in favor of billon. The hoarding and melting down of coins was known as culling, and in 1393 Venetian nobleman and culler Leonardo Gradenigo was sentenced to loss of his two eyes and right hand, and banishment. Criminals also “sweated” coins of their silver by bathing them in mercury, and clipped edges of gold and silver pieces. Finally, even the personnel at the various mints had to be trusted not to clip, steal, or unofficially debase coins.

See also: *Arts*: Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; *Economics and Work*: Accounting; Banks and Banking; Credit and Loans; Wages and Prices; *Politics and Warfare*: Crime and Punishments; *Science and Technology*: Metallurgy

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CONSTRUCTION, BUILDING

When a painter is given credit for a painting, it is because he imagined it, designed it, prepared all the materials, and applied them given his highest level of skill. When other hands are apparent on the wall or panel, the phrase "with workshop" or "workshop of . . ." often appears on the caption. When an architect is credited with a building, it is really just recognition that he laid out a design that others followed—however brilliant the design. In some cases he oversaw construction and ordered alterations if the occasions arose. In the case of Filippo Brunelleschi's providing the cathedral of Florence with its iconic dome, he even designed the cranes and other tools that made the construction possible. In no way, however, can one say that he "built" the structure.

In the case of the Duomo's dome, that distinction fell to about 300 hard-working, ill-paid, and sometimes wounded laborers and their bosses. Some possessed exquisite skills and trained others, while many were merely human machines of legs and arms connected by strong backs. These latter felled the trees for scaffolding timbers; carried water; mixed mortar; made and transported bricks; managed animals; quarried and carted stone, and helped it defy gravity by countering its weight with their own on the other side of a pulley's wheels. Working beside the laborers were the masters and their apprentices. These carpenters, woodcarvers, bricklayers, masons, sculptors, metal-smiths, glaziers, and other craftsmen applied their expertise to the materials on the site and directed their placement in the structure itself. Over both groups were site managers who made sure that everyone was occupied and doing what was expected. They oversaw the flow of materials onto the site and into the structure, making sure that nothing ran out. Their concern for safety ensured that they tested equipment and guarded against overloading it, which was easy to do with bricks and stone. They also had a surgeon on call to bind wounds and set broken limbs, and kept track of each worker's daily work record. The crews were paid by the foreman and clerk of the Cathedral works at end of the day on Saturdays,



Florence's Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore was begun in 1296 under the direction of Arnolfo di Cambio. Designed for a huge dome, a feasible design emerged only in 1420. Sculptor and architect Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446) created an ingenious double-dome system with wooden and iron chains, and work was completed in 1469. The exterior is faced with marble from across Tuscany, and the structure measures 153 meters long, 90 meters at the transepts, and the dome's top 114.5 meters from the ground. (Corel)

and had Sundays free for rest and worship. The skilled craftsmen belonged to guilds whose regulations guided their practices, though a project as grand as this—it took over 49 years (1420–1469)—imposed its own norms. They brought their own tools and food to the site, though hot meals appeared in 1426.

Despite the battalions of workers engaged, Renaissance-era society viewed the architect as the man who made it all happen, and many would have credited the patron who hired him. The culture was much more willing to give credit to the intellectual achievement in matters architectural than to the manual labor that necessarily brought the ideas to fruition. It was an old pre-Marxist bias that went back to the Greek and Romans. The revival of the architectural work by Roman architect Vitruvius reinforced this attitude. The many Renaissance versions of his books by practicing architects such as Leonbattista Alberti, Sebastiano Serlio, and Andrea Palladio also privileged the mental and aesthetic elements

over the actual construction. Yet it was not the idea but the structures themselves that lent magnificence to Palladio's Brenta Valley or the streets of Rome or Florence.

Much construction work of the period was not new, from the ground up, but like adding the cathedral dome, a process of extending, or removing some old feature and replacing it, as at St. Peter's in Rome, or of consolidating existing structures, as in many Florentine palazzi. The Palazzo Medici in Florence replaced some

20 buildings and shops. Other projects involved repairing or renovating older buildings. Sometimes this was done, so the building could serve other or additional purposes: a hunting lodge or small castle in the country became a villa. In monarchies, new rulers often sought to put their stamps on their families' built spaces, as in the Paolina and more famous Sistine chapels in the Vatican. Florence's Brunelleschi designed the new Pazzi family chapel at Santa Croce and renovated the interiors of Santo Spirito and the Medici church of San Lorenzo. Or rather, he provided the revolutionary designs carried out by the men who performed the labor.

In Rome, the construction industry was second only to the cloth and clothing industries in the number it employed. In 1526, on the eve of the hugely destructive Sack of Rome, it utilized 16% of adult workers. Goldthwaite has estimated that 25% of Florence's guildsmen belonged to the construction trades, and that they were the city's fastest-growing sector. When the Strozzi family in Florence built its famous palazzo beginning in 1489, during the first 600 days they employed 89 stonecutters. A later generation's lack of funds and interest left the original project incomplete. Construction, of course, also included all of the finishing work required, whether on villa or church. Venice's patrician Ca d'Oro (Golden House) palazzo employed workers in 64 different crafts. These included plasterers, painters, gilders, weavers of draperies, tilers, cabinetmakers, intarsia artists, woodcarvers, glassmakers, glaziers, and metal-smiths.

The Middle Ages are known for its castles, cathedrals, and city halls and walls. Yet, the Renaissance era contributed enormously to Italian cityscapes. Between 1350 and 1600 major churches included Florence's Duomo, Rome's St. Peter's, and Milan's Cathedral. Every city gained many major patrician palazzi and monarchical capitals noble palaces. Italy's countryside was dotted with villas both modest and grand, and outside cities grew up great fortresses with low, sloped walls and gun platforms for artillery. Oh the shovel-ready jobs these provided.

See also: *Arts*: Antiquity, Cult of; *Economics and Work*: Apprentices; Book Printing and Sales; Guilds; *Families*: Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Palazzi; Villas; Water; *Politics and Warfare*: City Halls; Fortresses and Fortifications; *Religion and Beliefs*: Churches; *Science and Technology*: Machines and Engines; Tools

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CREDIT AND LOANS

Despite the fact that a large percentage of economic transactions in Renaissance-era Italy were in kind, the economy was based on money. Values of raw materials, finished products, labor, rents, donations, and many other economic goods were understood and expressed in monetary terms. An exchange on credit was one in which the good or service was provided but payment was delayed by a set time. When a lender made a loan, he provided the borrower with a sum of cash in return for the promise of future payment of the sum. The borrower often had to provide the lender with the pledge of something of roughly equal value to the amount loaned, such as real estate or jewelry, to be taken should the borrower be unable to repay the sum due on time. This collateral made lending money rather safe; loans without collateral were much riskier. A pawn occurred when the collateral was handed over to the lender for safe-keeping until the debt came due or was paid off. Since both credit transactions and loans were forms of contracts, failure to live up to the terms could result in legal actions and imprisonment for debt. By the mid-fourteenth century most forms of borrowing against the future were well developed and very common across Italy.

Those who extended credit were usually people who sold raw materials or wholesale or retail goods. Those who provided services also routinely provided their labor with an agreement for future payment. Purchases on credit were routinely made by people at all levels of society, from kings and popes to urban laborers and peasants. Landowners needed credit for purchasing more land, for buying expensive capital such as new buildings, plows, vines and trees, livestock, and annual seeds. Peasants and landowners alike relied on sale of the harvest to repay creditors. Wealthy landowners often extended credit to their peasants or laborers, providing food, agricultural implements, seed, or other necessary materials against future repayment at harvest. Printers received wholesale paper on credit; cloth merchants obtained wool on credit; and spice merchants extended credit to grocers and apothecaries. Small businesses gave credit to customers, taking care to note every detail of the transaction. While cash sales were rarely recorded, those on

credit filled account books. Debts for credit could also be exchanged: if Giovanni owed Luca 11 florins, and Luca owed Marco 10 florins, then Luca could “pay” Marco by passing Giovanni’s larger debt to Marco. Credit worthiness was the key: if both Giovanni and Luca were businessmen of good repute, or property owners, or otherwise well off, then Marco could feel safe in extending credit to Luca and trust that Giovanni was good for the full sum he owed. Poorer folk were clearly at a disadvantage in obtaining credit, and strangers had little chance at all. Credit might be given to these by extending payments due, such as rent. Powerful men made credit a part of their patron/client relationships, extending credit to those who supported them or offering credit to those who promised to do so.

Loans of cash were not quite as common, but many of the same elements applied. Kings and other lords borrowed cash to pay everyone from tailors to mercenary armies. Large-scale merchants borrowed cash when abroad rather than carrying large amounts with them while traveling. In Rome a Genoese merchant would borrow the necessary cash, carry out his transactions, and have his partners back home either repay or extend credit to the Roman lender’s branch in Genoa. By the Renaissance banks were playing this intermediary role. Locally, small businesses that handled cash would loan it, as did notaries, widows, landowners, Jews, clergy, institutions such as hospitals, and even well-off peasants. Bosses made loans to workers as advances on their wages so they could pay their regular or extraordinary bills. According to a study of small-scale merchants in Prato, near Florence, a single apothecary made 933 loans over 14 years in the later 1300s. It also found that 95% of loan debts were paid off, usually within days or even hours. Most small loans were secured with pawned collateral, often in the form of a gold florin worth far more than the debt. Absent collateral, the transaction might be witnessed by two or three neighbors, whose names the lender would record. In a village this was often the only kind of record made of loans, unless the local priest was willing and able to write down the details. Smaller loans were often guaranteed by the pledge of a reputable third party, who essentially agreed to assume the debt if the borrower defaulted. Larger loans with payment due in months or years might be recorded by a notary. Both credit and cash loans were very important elements of the Italian economy, though most small deals were made between family members, neighbors, friends, renters, business associates, and other people known well to each other. Honor played a role as well, as sustained debt was a blot on one’s reputation. Nonetheless, debtors’ prisons rarely lacked inmates.

The Council of Vienne (1311–1312) expressly forbade Christians to charge interest on borrowed money (usury), and Dante reserved a place in hell for usurers. Nonetheless, lenders took the spiritual risk and often embedded hidden interest by having the repayment in another currency or simply lending 9 florins and recording and collecting 10 in repayment. Penalties for late repayment could also be used to

hide interest: if the reasonable repayment date was the 15th the agreement might be for the first, with the two-week “penalty” covering the agreed-upon lending fee. Jews were not subject to Christian religious law, and their willingness to lend at interest made them both necessary and despised in many communities.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Accounting; Banks and Banking; Mezzadria; Notaries; Retail Selling; Wages and Prices; *Family and Gender*: Families, Laboring Class; *Housing and Community*: Villages and Village Life

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GRAIN TRADE

For most Renaissance-era Italians, grains provided an estimated 50% to 75% of their daily caloric intake. Wheat was at the top of the carbohydrate-rich list, which in Italy included spelt, millet, rice, barley, buckwheat, rye, and oats. Pure white wheat bread was a luxury food, as most producers or growers considered it a cash crop necessary to sell at market. Peasants used other grains to extend wheat flour when it was available, or in forms other than bread, including porridge, pancakes, gruel, dumplings, and as a soup thickener. Maize or corn came to Italy from the New World after 1493, but was considered little more than an animal feed until the seventeenth century. Rice was initially cultivated in Spain and the Balearic Islands, arriving in northern Italy as plants in the fifteenth century. It grew well in the wet lowlands from the Po Valley to Sicily, but served as a food for the poor and during famines, and its flour was mixed with those of other grains as an extender. Buckwheat’s origins were north of the Alps, and buckwheat had to be specially prepared for human consumption in mush and “gray polenta.” Millet was another poor person’s grain, but it had the advantage of a long shelf-life: up to ten years if

kept from sprouting. Sixteenth-century Venice kept large stores of millet, as well as wheat, against famine, war, or isolation due to plague.

Because wheat had a largely urban demand, and could command healthy prices, there was an Italian market for imported wheat that stretched from the Middle Ages through the Renaissance era. By the mid-1300s merchants from Florence, Venice, Siena, and Genoa regularly imported wheat from the Mediterranean's major fields in Apulia, Sicily, and to a lesser extent, North Africa. Unlike Rome, Milan, or Naples, none of these cities had a hinterland, or *contado*, in which wheat could be produced in sufficient quantity. Wheat was temperamental to grow, but could be stored for fairly long periods in well-built granaries or below deck in seagoing ships. The demand of urban merchants and customers kept wheat's price buoyed, but its yield in the field was very low compared with modern hybrids. Competition, then, could be fierce.

Demand for all cereal grains grew as post-Black Death population levels slowly recovered, especially in cities. Arguably, Florentine expansion into Tuscany from the later 1300s was due to a desire to control a wheat-growing hinterland, despite generally poor regional wheat-growing conditions. Its acquisitions of Pisa in 1406 and Livorno (Leghorn) and Porto Pisano in 1421 were in part to insure that the city upriver would have unimpeded access to seaborne imports. Venice's creation of its mainland *Terraferma* empire in the Veneto region served a similar purpose. Even so, great roundships—averaging 100 to 540 tons each—plied the peninsula's east and west coasts loaded with cargo from grain-rich Naples or Palermo, or any of the 11 depots along the Sicilian coast. Apulian ports of Manfredonia, Trani, and Foggia regularly sent out loaded ships to Naples, Ragusa, and Venice. In the sixteenth century Genoa annually imported some 8,000 tons of wheat, the equivalent of two dozen medium shiploads.

In the mid-sixteenth century, urban populations increased and demand outstripped Italian supply, which meant that wheat began to arrive from the eastern Mediterranean, southeastern Europe, and even Baltic regions. In 1554 alone, Italian bottoms are said to have carried 40,320 tons of Egyptian wheat, barley, and beans. This was despite the Turkish Sultan's ban on sales to Italians. His ban on Egyptian sales may have been due to Turkish (Anatolian) surpluses from 1551, which he happily dumped on Italian markets. In 1551, Venice and Genoa imported some 28,000 tons of Anatolian wheat. That amounts to 94 shiploads at an average of 300 tons per vessel. Greater efficiencies were to be had from larger cargo capacities, so merchant ships rated at 600 tons soon appeared in Italian ports.

European wheat also reached a price level that made its transport profitable. From the 1450s Genoa had imported French wheat that had been shipped down the Rhône River to Marseilles. The grain from Spain stayed mainly on the plains surrounding the burgeoning cities north of Naples, with whose wheat it competed.

In 1527, grain ships from Flanders and England made port in Venice, and a dozen years later 16 vessels left Antwerp loaded with wheat bound for granaries in Genoa, Florence, and Lucca. By the 1540s many Tuscan towns were being supplied from Flanders. From the 1560s to 1600 and beyond, famine or near-famine conditions across Italy put heavy strains on grain supplies and imports. From 1586 even normally dry Sicily suffered heavy rainfalls that ruined crops. In northern ports, including Danzig and Hamburg, Florentine agents of both the Medici grand dukes and independent merchants succeeded in attracting grain southward. As an aid, the Medici made Livorno a free port that charged no taxes on commercial exchanges.

Wheat was sold retail as flour and in the grain, which had a much longer shelf life. Guild bakers sold bread, but they also baked loaves of dough brought to them. When supplies were strained or drained by war or famine, civic or royal governments relied upon stored grain to feed not only the poor but everyone else as well. Florence's famous church of Or San Michele was a communal granary during the Black Death; in 1602 Venice reported 44 state grain warehouses.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Retail Selling; Trade, Seaborne; Trade Routes, Overland; *Food and Drink*: Bread; Grains and the Wheat Market; Nutrition: A Modern Assessment; *Housing and Community*: Poor, Aid to; Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare*: Contado and Subject Towns; *Science and Technology*: Agriculture and Agronomy; Ships and Shipbuilding

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GUILDS

The Renaissance-era Italian guild was an association of professionals (lawyers, physicians, bankers), artisans (bakers, tailors, masons, cloth dyers), merchants (wool cloth, silk clothing), retailers (apothecaries, grocers, fishmongers), or service providers (notaries, barbers, innkeepers). The guild—*societas*, *arte*, *universitas*—had its roots in Roman law and its revival in twelfth-century cities. Each was a

club of masters that protected the interests of all members by regulating apprentice training, entry into the local market, and activity in it (product or service quality, pricing, technology, wages, working conditions). Civic constitutions formally recognized guilds and registered their statutes and regulations. In Florence, the communal government directly represented the guilds, requiring membership for political position. Only the Perugian Bankers and Merchants guilds had places on their city's ruling priorate, dominating all other guilds in power and prestige. In other cities, guilds vied with governments for political and economic power. Guild members appeared together for civic gatherings and processions, and guaranteed Christian burial of dead members and support for their families. In most cities and many towns guilds formed a matrix within which economic life was organized.

Neapolitan guilds appeared throughout Il Regno, and were the means by which royal and baronial governments controlled local economies. Political authorities had to approve all guild activities, and guilds removed themselves from any political participation. Like guilds everywhere, Neapolitan guilds held tribunals to arbitrate disputes and punish fraud and infractions of rules. State courts, however, had appellate jurisdiction and could overturn their decisions. Guilds could be forced to enroll new masters, or masters to employ more workers to remedy unemployment. Guilds of food suppliers, preparers, and retailers were strictly regulated by feudal or royal orders when provisions were low. In Naples itself, there were as many as 350 guilds, many of which specifically served the needs of the royal or vice-regal court.



The Tailor, painted by Venetian G. B. Moroni (ca. 1523–1578), ca. 1565, displays the professional demeanor sought by guildsmen, especially in market centers such as Venice or Florence. His clothing is impeccably up to date and clean, his trousers fashionably slashed to reveal a contrasting fabric beneath. He sports a beard of a contemporary cut and looks at the artist/customer with an eye of confidence and willingness to please. Oil on canvas. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

Numbers of guilds tended to expand in any given area. Neapolitan King Ferrante founded a new silkmakers guild in 1465; and Genoese dry pasta sellers gained a guild in 1574. In 1403, 74 guilds represented Genoa's economic interests; 82 did by 1550. Genoese male and female fruiterers split, as did tavern-keepers and innkeepers, and local spice retailers and apothecaries. Elsewhere in the sixteenth century, guilds of barbers and surgeons tended to part company, as did grocers and apothecaries, while new technologies such as printing added guilds of papermakers, printers, and booksellers.

Rome's guilds came into their own only in the fifteenth century. They operated under the eyes of Rome's civic government located on the Campidoglio (Capitoline Hill), where guild officials held tribunals. They had no political power and were often filled with non-Roman "foreigners": Lombards and Florentines as well as Germans, French, English, and Spaniards. Guilds were a means of keeping an eye on these outsiders, who in turn often benefited from guild loans, dowries, or burial benefits. The major exception was the cattle breeders guild, which consisted of nobles from the nearby Campania region.

Venice was a city controlled by the interests of great international merchants who had no guild. Here, too, guilds served many typical functions but were largely apolitical, having been banned from political participation in 1297. Nearly 100 existed in 1600, half of which were retailers and three of which dealt with different types of fur. Large guilds could have as many as 1,000 members, while an average was closer to 250. By the fourteenth century, each guild had a confraternity, or *scuola*, attached, making institutional the expected religious side of city residence. Each guild had its chapel and altar, where brothers gathered to pray for past and current members. Income to support worship, banners for processions, and burial of indigent brothers came from fees, dues, fines, and income from donated properties. The government's Office of Justice oversaw guild activities, and in 1539 each guild was required to provide naval reserve oarsmen for state galleys.

Though Venice banned guilds from participation in government, Florence organized its government as a federation of 7 Greater and 14 Lesser guilds. The major guilds were cloth importers, bankers, physicians and spicers, furriers, judges and notaries, cloth retailers, and silk makers. Their fourteenth-century guildhalls were impressive additions to the city's landscape. Woolworkers who had been hit hard by plague epidemics rioted and temporarily won guild status in the Ciompi Revolt (1378–82). In 1382 oligarchic reaction—led by butchers—was swift and brutal; the Ciompi losing their new guilds and Lesser guilds as a whole losing their political power. In 1532 the new Medici duke erased all distinctions among Florentine guilds and in 1534 consolidated them all under his growing bureaucracy.

Trademarks

Rooted in Roman and medieval precedents, Renaissance-era producers and merchants affixed their specific and often registered symbols to a wide range of goods. For some the local guild's hallmark sufficed. Merchants marked their bales, boxes, barrels, and other containers; brick makers stamped and masons carved theirs; and cities required that bolts of cloth have the manufacturer's as well as the guild's marks attached to the edge of each bolt. By the fourteenth century paper had watermarks and printers affixed their logos to title pages and forgers forged them. This practice led to branding and painters signing their works.

Many cities recognized the need for a central commercial court that did not represent a single guild or even the interests of the city government. These emerged as the Mercanzia in Florence, Merchants' Forum in Bologna, and Milanese Merchants' Consuls. Staffed by representatives from at least the major guilds, they judged disputes between members of guilds, between guilds, or between the city and a guild. The Mercanzia often had its own building. Siena's, opened in 1309, featured upscale retail shops on the ground floor and rooms for judicial business on the floor above, a layout shared with many northern Italian Mercanzia halls.

See also: *Arts: Painters and Their Workshops; Economics and Work: Apprentices; Retail Selling; Wages and Prices; Politics and Warfare: Republics; Recreation and Social Customs: Civic Festivals; Religion and Beliefs: Confraternities*

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IMPORTED GOODS, SOURCES OF

Italy's geographical position, commercial infrastructure, and mercantile spirit sustained by the notion that business and profit were good made the states on the peninsula economic powerhouses in Europe and the Mediterranean. By the fourteenth century, goods were flowing into, out of, and through the peninsula via the ports of Venice, Naples, Bari, Ancona, Genoa, Livorno, Palermo, and Messina, and along roads connecting urban centers such as Florence, Rome, Turin, and Milan. Ships sailed from the peninsula in every direction and returned laden with foreign goods; Venice and Genoa maintained colonies and trading posts in the eastern Mediterranean and Black Seas. For many years Italians essentially monopolized trade with eastern Mediterranean Muslims, Byzantine Greeks, and merchantmen and caravans from points further east. Much of what arrived at Venetian docks quickly moved north across the Alps, or to French or Spanish ports, but a good deal was left behind to enrich the accounts of local merchants and the lives of well-off Italians.

Foodstuffs flowed into Italy from all directions. Grain supplements during periods of shortage came from North Africa, Spain, Hungary, Turkey, Greece, and even Poland. During Lent the demand for fish rose, leading to imports of Newfoundland salted cod from England, smoked and salted herring from the Baltic, and fresh catches that arrived at Naples and Genoa in French and Catalan boats. Even Russian caviar appeared on Italian tables. Certain palates preferred non-Italian wines, which flowed in from France, Spain, and Greece. Certain hardy fruits and vegetables such as melons and citrus fruits arrived from Islamic ports, along with palm dates and other exotics.

There were no real lines between spices and a wide range of medicinal "simples," or ingredients. Turmeric, cinnamon, black pepper, ginger, and a host of other fragrant barks, flowers, seeds, leaves, and roots were sold wholesale in Islamic ports, having been transported by ship or caravan from their places of origin in Asia, Africa, or the Indian Ocean. Sugar, too, was both food and medicine. It had its roots in the East, but Spanish and Portuguese plantations such as Madeira produced it less expensively, opening the door to Caribbean sugar works. Contact with the Americas brought new edibles such as corn (maize) and the tomato that could be grown in Italy. American peppers found buyers in Italian shops, but it was South American guaiac wood, or Jesuit bark, that really caught on. It was a remedy for syphilis.

Italian apothecaries handled the sweet and the spicy, as well as aromatic woods and incense that arrived from Islamic ports. They also carried painters' pigments and dyestuffs for turning cloth from drab beige to stunning blues and scarlets. These sometimes traveled long distances, as did the most famous deep blue pigment lapis lazuli. It was also known as ultramarine as it originated "across the

sea” in Afghanistan and nowhere else. Musk deer oil used as a base for expensive perfumes came from Tibet, and what became the standard for red dye, cochineal, from Mexico.

The cloth industry also relied on imported raw silk from eastern ports and wool from many places, including Scotland and England, Flanders, Provence, Spain, the Balkans, Crete, and Turkey. Different breeds of sheep, climatic conditions, and even diets produced wools of varying qualities. This was processed and turned into cloth of varying qualities by expert Italian artisans. Much of this in turn was exported. Italians had stolen the technology of silk-making and made it their own. Their deluxe products were second to none in the West, which meant a continued demand for raw silk, a good deal of which was imported from Islamic ports. Exotic Chinese silks and brocades, like Chinese porcelain, had a strong cachet in Italy, and importers found ready markets. Partially finished silk cloth from eastern looms was also welcome. Since Italians wore fur as accents or garment linings, and since Italy is warm and native furbearing animals did not produce the finest product, much had to be imported from northern climes, as far afield as Russia.

Italians were less deft at producing certain decorative cloth items, such as tapestries, most of which had to be imported from Netherlandish artisans, and the beautiful and expensive carpets that appear in so many paintings. These last were produced in Turkey, Egypt, and to a lesser degree in Iran, were shipped from Cairo and Damascus, and were used on tables and hung on walls.

Both Spain and the Muslim Mediterranean world provided Italians with high-end leather and leather goods, from shoes to decorative shields to book covers. Both areas also supplied the best ceramic ware, at least until Italians mastered the technique of Valencian lusterware. Milan may have been the center for fine armor and weapons, but lower-end brass objects, especially highly decorated ones, were Mamluk and Turkish specialties. The key here was incising surfaces or incising and filling the grooves with gold or silver to accentuate the pattern, a process known as damascening. Turkish and Egyptian artists were second to none in their skills at applying arabesques, floral designs, Arabic calligraphy, and interlacing. Some European metal products were sent to Cairo or Damascus just for decorating. Muslim artisans produced a range of goods from ewers, buckets, and candlesticks to perfume burners and plates just for the Italian market.

See also: *Arts: Painting: Media and Techniques; Economics and Work: Apothecaries; Book Printing and Sales; Cloth Trade; Grain Trade; Slaves and Slavery; Spice Trade; Trade, Seaborne; Trade Routes, Overland; Fashion and Appearance: Dyes and Dyestuffs; Fabrics, Imported; Gems and Jewelry; Scents and Perfumes; Food and Drink: Foreign Foods; Grains and the Wheat Market; Wines; Science and Technology: Pharmacopeias and Materia Medica*

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MANUFACTURING

The word manufacture literally means to make with the hands. Unlike today, during the Renaissance era this was literally true. Tools and even machines such as power looms, printing presses, and water mills did much of the repetitive work, but these in turn were built manually—by the human hand. It took the Industrial Revolution to harness the power of steam and the modern age that of fossil fuels and the atom. Nonetheless, during the Renaissance era Italy was Europe’s center for manufactured goods and their distribution.

The repetitious process of printing on a press is a clear example of manufacturing. Paper, ink, and lead type were assembled, and the press placed the paper in contact with the inked type. Even so, skilled humans set the type, applied the ink with ink balls, positioned the paper, and used human power to put the two into contact. The process was repetitious, but not automated. Venice was the center for printing, and it also hosted Europe’s largest “manufactory” or factory, the Arsenale. This was the state-controlled shipyard from which uniformly designed and produced galleys slid into the Adriatic and sailed beyond for war and trade. This facility was a prototype of the factory in the modern sense: it gathered skilled workers, materials, and tools, and provided space for production from laying the keel to locking oars and setting the rigging for the sails. Ropes were twined on the long, narrow ropewalk known as the Tana; canvas cloth was sewn into sails; there was even a workshop of makers of breastplates worn in naval battles. Warehouses contained everything a ship needed to go to sea, even wine. Gunpowder had a special shed, but after an explosion in 1569 it was stored outside the facility. Like a printer’s shop, the Arsenale housed repetitious processes, but here was an early example of vertical organization, in which each distinct stage in a very complex program was carried out in one place under one director. This model of state-directed production was never attempted by other Italian rulers, at least not on

the scale of the Arsenale. Smaller versions included papal gunpowder production, the duke of Ferrara's artillery founding, and the several workshops of the Medici Tuscan grand dukes.

Venetian glassmaking was certainly a case of manufacturing. With deep medieval roots it was carried out by private firms but rigidly regulated by the state. Like the Arsenale, glassmaking was concentrated, on the island of Murano, but workshop organization was entrepreneurial rather than centrally directed. Each factory trained its workers and carefully guarded its chemical and technical secrets. The state did not need glassware as it did ships, but it was enriched in taxes and reputation by the work produced. It encouraged immigration by trained and skilled craftsmen and sought to stop emigration by Venetian glassworkers. Milan had long been known as the Italian center for the production of fine weapons and armor. Milanese lords certainly encouraged the immigration of German and Swiss artisans, and of course used some of what was produced. Some shops specialized in one or another step in production, while others gathered all of the necessary specialists under one roof. Like Venetian glass, Milan's metalwork was prized across Europe and throughout the Mediterranean, so there was a constant demand for its products. Also like glassware, some products were plain and utilitarian and easily reproduced, while many orders were for unique articles of great beauty and quality fit for a sultan or the Holy Roman Emperor.

After agriculture, cloth manufacturing was Italy's biggest employer. Cipolla (p. 64) provides a few examples of the dominance of the industry: in 1409 it employed 37% of Verona's workforce; in 1439, 30% of Como's; in 1541, 25% of Monza's; and in 1552, 41% of Florence's. Most cloth was made from either animal sources—wool and silk—or plant fibers—cotton, linen, and hempen canvas. The journey from source to garment or other product was unique to each type of material, and consisted of many stages. Early stages were tedious and required little skill or judgment. Those who owned the material often "put-out" the raw material to experienced and trustworthy workers who performed the tasks at home. Weaving, dyeing, and other, later processes required skilled workers and equipment that might have been assembled by a single entrepreneur or farmed out to specialists. There were thus many different models of organization and production in the cloth industry at any one time. As with glassmaking and arms manufacturing, there were low-end and luxury fabrics. There was a constant local demand for both cheap and expensive fabrics, and an export market from major Italian cities that suffered from increasing competition during the sixteenth century. Florence, noted for its woollens, could count some 270 workshops around 1500, a number that dropped to 64 in 1537 thanks in part to war and plague. By century's end, only some 100 workshops were active.

The line between manufacturing and craft production was both thin and blurry. Yet even a quick overview reveals the variety of businesses and products that fell under the label manufacturing.

See also: *Arts*: Ceramics, Decorative; Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; Clothmaking; Putting-Out System; *Housing and Community*: Foreign Communities; *Politics and Warfare*: Arms and Armor; *Science and Technology*: Glassmaking; Machines and Engines; Metallurgy; Printing; Ships and Shipbuilding; Tools

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MEZZADRIA

Mezzadria was a kind of sharecropping arrangement between a landowner and an independent farmer and his family. Essentially, the owner provided the land, equipment, and half the annual seed (or the trees or vines), while the farmer and his family provided half the seed and the necessary agricultural labor. Typically maintenance and repairs to buildings, roads, bridges, and canals also fell to the laborer, who usually lived on the property being leased rather than in a village. After a crop was harvested, it was divided evenly between the two. This was a contractual agreement, often notarized, and its terms were enforceable in local courts.

Considered by some modern scholars to have been midway between medieval manorialism and modern capitalism, mezzadria began in Tuscany in the mid-1200s

as manorialism and serfdom, to the extent they existed in northern Italy, fell apart under the revival of Roman concepts of landed property ownership, and the rise of a land-owning urban middle class. Since typically contracts lasted only two or three years, it was in both parties' interests to live up to their obligations, assuming they got along. Presumably mezzadria provided an efficient exploitation of the land and allowed both parties to enjoy a measure of self-sufficiency. But should the laborers prove lazy or thieving the owner could simply not renew the contract. If an owner proved overly demanding or tried to cheat his workers, they could find another landlord, a real threat after the Black Death sharply shrank the labor pool. This labor shortage persisted until the 1470s. Fifteenth-century Siena strove to retain these sharecroppers by protecting them through laws and the courts, and by reducing certain taxes and granting immunity or swift appeals.

In some ways there was a thin line between rental and mezzadria arrangements, but there were also important distinctions. Tuscan rental contracts were typically for 29 years. Unlike rent, half of the produce harvested self-adjusted without reference to market conditions, weather, or other external factors. A renter took all the economic risks, hoping that whatever he produced would cover both rent payment and provide food for his table. In good years he could cover the fixed rent with plenty of produce left over to feed his family and have some to take to market. In years of bad or disrupted harvests, or when market prices dropped, renters often fell into debt. They might have had to sell or pawn household goods or vital equipment and purchase seed the following year on credit. Sharecroppers had a certain protection from these events, though half of little was very little.

Though one might think of landlords as nobles living on their estates, in mid-fifteenth-century Tuscany fully 75% of those offering mezzadria contracts were city folk, and many of them far from the wealthiest. Florence's 1427 census shows that two-thirds of taxpayers owned some rural land. Merchants and artisans cobbled together country farms and let them out, though a worker's cropland could be scattered in several places. The idea was that a single sharecropper would work a single holding, perhaps 100 acres, which would be enough to provide for both parties. Other landowners included rulers, wealthy nobles, monasteries, and bishops with extensive and often scattered holdings. Some of these preferred mezzadria, but half of a major cash crop, such as wheat or wine, was too high a price to pay. For them, hired peasant workers met their needs better, and allowed renters and sharecroppers to supplement their income by hiring themselves out. Studies have shown that in Tuscany, many sharecroppers actually owned land and sold their crops, but served bigger landowners as sharecroppers to provide a hedge against market forces and to put food on their tables. Such farmers could also benefit from borrowing the richer landowner's farm animals, tools, equipment, and facilities—mills, kilns, winepresses, threshing floors—with or without his consent. Of course, there

were many variations on classic mezzadria, depending on the region and types of land or crops involved. For example, if land produced both wheat and wine grapes, the farmer might owe annually half of one crop and a fixed cash rent for the other. At the end of a season the parties often relied on a third party to estimate the shares due each. Unless the owner had a rural villa or other storage facilities, the farmer would cart the share to town in the owner's wagons and the owner would pay the gate toll. If the owner did have a *casa di signore*—(land)lord's house—this was often occupied by a paid overseer or administrator who kept an eye on things and reported any problems.

The practice of mezzadria spread throughout Tuscany during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and to the surrounding regions of Umbria, Romagna, and the Marches. In the fifteenth century it moved into Emilia, but never penetrated north of the Po, where more traditional forms of land exploitation continued, including renting and limited-scale ownership of smallholds. In Liguria local nobles seized land and introduced manorialism. South of Tuscany and the Marches feudal and manorial practices remained in place alongside renting and smallholding. The strength of mezzadria was also its ultimate weakness. It did not respond to market forces of supply and demand, nor did it encourage innovation in agricultural practice. Almost everywhere sharecropping provided only limited surpluses for sale, which meant that the workers could hardly accumulate any resources to advance their economic position. Only in the Marches did owners and sharecroppers export sizeable quantities of food, in their case to and through Venice. For even large landowners, however, mezzadria did provide a useful hedge against high food prices or low market supplies. Indeed, the first reason to own rural land was to provide for one's family.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Notaries; Taxes and Public Finance; *Family and Gender:* Families, Laboring Class; *Food and Drink:* Foodsellers and Markets; Grains and the Wheat Markets; *Housing and Community:* Gardens; Villages and Village Life; Villas; *Politics and Warfare:* Civic Magistracies and Offices; Contado and Subject Towns; *Science and Technology:* Agriculture and Agronomy; *Primary Document:* Tuscan Landlords and Peasants: A Mezzadria Contract from Lucca (c. 1350) and a Landowner's Memorandum (c. 1410)

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Money. See Coins, Coinage, and Money

NOTARIES

The notary was an indispensable figure in any Renaissance-era Italian community. He was privately trained and licensed by the papacy or Holy Roman Empire to create and preserve a wide range of legally enforceable documents. Rooted in Classical Rome, notaries operated throughout the Middle Ages in Mediterranean Christian societies, but became especially vital and numerous with the adoption of Roman law in much of Italy from the twelfth century. Thirteenth and fourteenth-century “notarial art” handbooks as well as legal studies in the new universities standardized much notarial practice, though local custom dictated particular elements of it. Notarial guilds or colleges tested applicants and carefully monitored practice. Becoming a notary, however, was not a matter of university education but of practical learning from one’s father, as an apprentice, or in special civic schools overseen by the notarial guilds. Notaries were professionals with clearly defined skill sets, including at least basic Latin, but they did not have the status or high incomes of university graduates such as lawyers. Apart from basic competence, the notary’s most important quality was his reputation for honesty and trustworthiness.

From peasants to great lords, Italians relied on notaries to draft and preserve every sort of private legal document: marriage offers, dowry arrangements, and contracts with wet nurses, teachers, or masters with whom children were apprenticed; partnership agreements, insurance, contracts for works of art, sales contracts, loans, and deeds of gift; agreements ending disputes, land transfers, tenancy agreements, and last wills and testaments. Sometimes the client presented a written version of terms that the notary would dress up in the necessary legalese and record. Typically the party or parties involved, along with at least two witnesses (seven if a will) first met with the notary and discussed specifics, of which the notary made a rough draft in their presence. In the case of a dispute, this was the most authoritative version of the document. He then added necessary legal terms and customary clauses and preserved this version in his official—and public—record (protocol) book. Legal formalities included dating by year, date, and indiction: specifically where the agreement or terms were made, the list of witnesses, and the notary’s name and certification. If an issue arose, the notary’s written version trumped the testimony of anyone else involved. A notary, of course, could err: important terms could be omitted or recorded incorrectly; necessary legal language could be mangled or omitted; or a document presented to a court could just be a forgery, as signaled by erasures, a second hand, or poor grammar. Clients often requested a copy of the official version for their own records, though this had no legal force. Savvy clients knew to note the name or number of the record book and page number in which the notary had it recorded. Despite their importance, these books remained in their notaries’ hands and with their heirs (often notaries). Public

archives for these were usually late in developing: Florence in 1569 and the Papal States in 1588.

Notaries also served all manner of public officials, institutions, universities, courts, and other bodies. Church and civil courts used notaries to record depositions and court proceedings, or as witnesses in civil cases. The papal curia in Rome enrolled 101 notaries (1507) who had paid for the prestigious position. Guilds relied on notaries to record meetings, judicial proceedings, initiations, and elections. Hospitals, orphanages, and other charitable institutions required notaries to handle supply and employment contracts, land and other gift transfers, and rental agreements. Civic councils or assemblies employed notaries as correspondents with other cities, authors of new laws or changes to existing ones, diplomats to record negotiations, and scribes for the body's debates. In 1381 Perugia had 108 on its government payroll. Some civic notaries also maintained either official or informal chronicles of their cities, which are especially important to historians. In the fourteenth century notarial interest in local and Roman history was a seedbed for antiquarian interests in Classical literature, history, and artifacts. Their fascination with Classical Latin carried over into their professional work, especially in composing elegant Latin correspondence and official speeches. These Classical interests and activities were vital in shaping early Italian humanism. Florence so valued Classical eloquence that it required its chancellor, essentially its chief public notary, to be a humanist.

Hebrew Notaries

Renaissance-era Rome had a long-standing Jewish community. Unlike other, more recently developed subcultures, Roman Jews adapted to the dominant legal culture, especially after the establishment of the Ghetto in 1555. Though they usually used Christian notaries when dealing with Christians, among themselves emerged notaries—usually rabbis—who used Hebrew instead of Latin and exclusively served private needs. Hebrew notaries drew up documents touching marriage, divorce, gifts; contracts for apprenticeships and teaching positions; and inventories after a business sale or death. Sixteenth-century father and son Judah and Isaac Piatelli even created a Hebrew version of the “notarial art.”

Notaries were common throughout Italian societies. One Siennese peasant utilized around 30 over time, and rural-dwelling notaries were often the only literate village people apart from the priest. In Florence in 1427 there was one notary for every 125 people. It was the city's most frequently listed profession. Across Italy notarial guilds were among the largest and most powerful, and were often joined with judges or lawyers. Notaries on retainer for governments, the Church, or public bodies, or

institutions made steady, if not, impressive salaries that they could augment with service to private parties. Genoese and Venetian notaries served their homelands' colonies in the eastern Mediterranean and Black Seas, and some worked as secretaries to lords or other important men. Some Venetian notaries served as bureaucrats in its *Terraferma* (land empire). More prosaically, since they had command of Latin, many notaries had sidelines as grammar school or notarial school teachers.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Antiquity, Cult of; Apprentices; Guilds; *Family and Gender*: Dowries; Espousal and Wedding; Inheritance; Last Wills and Testaments; *Housing and Community*: Jewish Communities; Plague; Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare*: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Civic Magistracies and Offices; Urban Councils and Assemblies

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Overland Trade Routes. *See* Trade Routes, Overland

Prices. *See* Wages and Prices

Public Finance. *See* Taxes and Public Finance

PUTTING-OUT SYSTEM

The Industrial Revolution began the concentration of repetitive production activities in mill towns and factories. Before the eighteenth century large-scale facilities for manufacturing dotted the landscape, but multistage processes often had phases

that could be subcontracted to men, women, and even children who remained where they lived, worked when they had the time, and earned a piece-rate wage to supplement other income. A simple example was rural women who served as wet nurses to upper-class urban women's infants. The husbands of both made the contract according to which the new parent's child would be well fed and cared for in exchange for a set fee per month. The lactating country woman may have lost her own child or farmed her off to a neighbor to feed while she earned precious cash. The most typical use of putting-out, however, was in the many stages of both wool and silk cloth production.

Wool merchants purchased raw wool from wholesalers in England, Spain, and Sicily and had it shipped to northern Italian ports, including Venice and those of Florence. The merchant either sold it to a cloth manufacturer or managed its production himself. In the later 1300s merchant Francesco Datini of Florence and Prato had a facility in Prato that employed ten men, and he may have kept as many as 1,000 people in the area around Prato occupied with various stages of production. His copious records reveal that he provided tools, the raw wool, and an advance on wages. When finished with their stage, workers were provided with the remainder of their agreed-upon wage. After washing, wool was put out to be carded and combed and spun into thread, tasks that would have been familiar to rural families who raised sheep and made their own "homespun" cloth and clothes. These early tasks required minimal skill, and urban women and even children could master them quickly. Institutions such as convents and monasteries, orphanages, foundling homes, and hospitals could help subsidize their operations by taking in wool to work. Additional stages, such as weaving, dyeing, and finishing the cloth, were also often let out, but to skilled shops or individuals. The merchant who owned the wool determined such matters as weave, color, and type of finish, and judged whether the artisans had completed their tasks satisfactorily. He knew the markets in which the product would be sold, and took all of the risks across what could be a process of many months.

While Florentine merchants seem to have relied heavily on this system, Venetians had variations on it. In one, merchants sold or bartered the raw material or partially finished cloth to artisans who performed their tasks and then resold the product to the merchant at a value-added price. In another, noble merchants, who were not subject to the wool guild, provided wool or partially finished cloth to manufacturers who then let the material out to the appropriate individuals or shops for processing before returning it to the merchant to sell.

The growing silk manufacturing industry also took advantage of the putting-out system. Merchants with silk worm eggs and the mulberry leaves on which they fed pioneered its use in Lucca, and the necessary skills and knowledge traveled with immigrants to Florence and Venice. Unlike sheep's wool, raw silk is produced from

worms that can be grown by the thousands in warm, fairly compact spaces. When the worm has spun its cocoon, this is dried and then boiled. Timing is important, but the process is fairly simple. Dried again, the cocoon's silk filament is then reeled onto a spindle, a task that is made simpler with small or delicate fingers. Another winds the filament on a more open reel, and finally a "thrower" twists two to five filaments together to form a thread. A single cocoon's filament may be nearly a kilometer in length, but it can take up to 300 cocoons to make a pound of thread. Washed to remove natural gum, the thread is reduced in weight and ready for dyeing. Recent studies suggest that charitable institutions housing children and young women were perfect places for locating these activities. Indeed, in Florence and Bologna the respective silk guilds founded and supervised the cities' largest foundling homes.

Putting-out served both the entrepreneur and laborers. The former had a flexible workforce that received piecework wages, whom he paid only for production, and to whom he did not have to provide working space nor, usually, tools. Unless they broke contract, he had no labor issues and was generally protected by guild regulations. Workers could undertake as much work as they could foresee finishing and had no capital costs beyond their tools. They could work counter-cyclically, taking on these obligations when other work was difficult to find or seasonal work was finished. Many tasks could be done by wives and older children, adding precious cash to a family's coffers. But there were also drawbacks. Merchants had to trust that workers would honor their obligations on time, without supervision, and without ruining or selling the product. They had to trust that market demand for the finished product would remain stable or increase across the time the process took. For their part, workers could not rely on a steady income, and institutionalized labor amounted to little more than slavery.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Cloth Trade; Clothmaking; *Family and Gender*: Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing; *Fashion and Appearance*: Fabrics, Domestic; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Villages and Village Life; *Religion and Beliefs*: Nuns and Nunneries

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RETAIL SELLING

Retail sales were those in which the final users of goods were directly involved. Wholesalers bought in bulk, used warehouses for storage, and sold to those who then sold to the general public. Wholesalers made a profit by selling for a higher price than they had paid their suppliers, and retailers sold goods for more than they had paid in turn. Retailing provided consumers with convenience, reasonable quantities, and a local guarantee of quality. Many retail sellers operated out of small specialty shops located in specific parts of town or among their customers, while others, such as those who grew foodstuffs, had stalls in markets that were open every day or only on Saturdays. Some were mobile, moving from village to village or town to town, or circulating through larger towns with their goods—often food—on handcarts or in large baskets. Even established shops would send out shop-boys to peddle merchandise through the streets, especially on days of fairs or festivals.

Most retailers were organized into local guilds, whose elected officials ensured quality, proper weights and measures, and fair pricing. Since many retailers sold their own handmade goods, such as shoes, bread, or jewelry, guilds oversaw production as well as sales. The principle of transparency ensured that the producers, sellers, and producers/sellers kept no secrets from the public. Production spaces in larger shops were open to view from the street, and goods for sale were openly displayed. Shops often had a front wall made of three horizontal pieces: the top would fold up and out over the street to provide customers and goods with shade and protection from rain; the mid-section folded down and in to create a counter, while the lowest portion remained stationary. Some businesses, however, needed internal sales space. Apothecaries needed many shelves for their herbs and drugs, and often had chairs for barbers to perform bloodlettings; large booksellers needed to keep their stock perfectly dry, and some had chairs for readers sampling the wares; and a cloth merchant needed to keep his merchandise dry and clean while unrolling his bolts. Sellers often lived above their shops, storing inventory upstairs or in a cellar if appropriate. They usually rented their quarters from guilds, churches, hospitals, the city, or other landowners, changing locations as needed. A given shop often had a permanent and generic sign, so that “at the Eagle” might mean a baker’s, tailor’s, or potter’s shop, depending on the renter. Large cities had hundreds of shops: Florence had 1,560 in 1427, 1,660 in 1480, and 2,172 in 1561, and Venice added 517 new shops between 1560 and 1597. Renaissance Genoa hosted 70 cheese shops, in addition to grocers and itinerant sellers. Small towns and villages also had retailers to meet local needs. Sixteenth-century Tuscan Altopascio—population 700—kept five shoemakers, two grocers, a blacksmith, and a ceramics store in business. In 1590 Poppi, also in Tuscany, had nine grocers, two bakers, three apothecaries, a

mercier, barber, tailor, shoemaker, and a regular fair for 1,450 residents and rural neighbors.

Shopkeepers were usually individuals, though clearly some formed partnerships with family members, creditors, or even suppliers. A study of Tuscan Prato demonstrated that tradesmen's wealth consisted of cash, inventory, furnishings, tools, and equipment, debts owed to the shop, and personal wealth such as dowry, inheritance, or land. Their expenses included inventory, rent, taxes, guild dues and fines, apprentices or other shop-workers, repairs, bad credit, upkeep and repair of the shop, and interest on loans. Profit margins were probably fairly low, since both competition and guild restrictions limited these. Scanty evidence shows that cheese-sellers and apothecaries could make 25% over the cost of inventory—from which had to come all other expenses. No wonder Prato's shops were open 365 days each year. Home delivery was not unknown, especially if the orders were large or bulky or if the customers were wealthy or powerful. Good service was one way to distinguish one's shop. Most sales would have been cash or credit, and cash sales were not usually recorded. Credit played a huge role in retail sales, a practice that required recording amounts and terms of the debt; and each business was a kind of independent bank, which might hold cash, exchange currencies, or make cash loans.

In addition to shops, markets gave ready access to retail goods. Large cities had regular markets that were open every day or most days. Florence distinguished the Old from the New Market, Rome had several, including its fish market near the Jewish Quarter, and in Venice freshly arrived spices could be had from the market at the Rialto. Sellers operated from booths or simple trestle tables, and market officials collected taxes on merchandise—not sales—and ensured honest prices

Mercanzia

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries northern Italian cities developed associations of merchants, bankers, brokers, and guild bosses known variously as Societies of Merchants, House of Merchants (Venice), or Mercanzia (Florence, Siena). These regulatory bodies oversaw and could direct almost any economic aspect of city life. They had jurisdiction over tolls, roads, fairs, currencies, weights and measures, and communities of foreign merchants; they could discipline guilds, businesses, and markets, and they consulted with communal governments on taxes, treaties, and trade deals. By appointing their own men, *signori* used these to direct local economies to their own purposes, from war to social control.

and practices and transparency. Livestock, fish, freshly slaughtered and processed meats, dairy goods, and fresh vegetables from local truck gardens probably made up the bulk of daily market goods. Special markets were associated with certain festival days. Normally stall-less *piazze* were decked out and sellers from far and wide set up temporary shop. Local shopkeepers closed their doors and occupied open-air quarters for the day. Entertainment by jugglers, singers, mountebanks, and preachers and fragrant carts from which seasonal specialty foods were sold drew even the most reclusive into the streets.

While villagers reveled on local market days, they most probably filled their day-to-day needs for manufactured goods from the carts of mobile sellers who visited their customers. Cookware and tableware, farming tools, sewing goods, and other commonly needed supplies would be traded for a few coins or food or other homemade goods that would be sold down the line. At the other end of the retail spectrum were the Italian fairs. Held for nine days or longer in summer or fall, licensed by the highest authority, and offering goods from far and wide, fairs drew buyers and sellers from as far as northern Europe and Spain. Venice and Padua held fairs lasting 15 days beginning, respectively, on Ascension Thursday (variable according to Easter's date, from mid-May to mid-June) and St. Anthony's Day on June 13. Though much selling was wholesale, visitors enjoyed a wealth of goods of all sorts. In 1488 at little Sinise in Umbria 78 stalls and 40 taverns catered to all comers.

See also: *Arts*: Ceramics, Decorative; Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; Painters and Their Workshops; *Prints*: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; Apprentices; Book Printing and Sales; Cloth Trade; Coins, Coinage, and Money; Credit and Loans; Guilds; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Children; Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Cosmetics; Gems and Jewelry; Scents and Perfumes; Tailors and Seamstresses; *Food and Drink*: Bread; Drugs; Eating Out; Foodsellers and Markets; Foreign Foods; Fruits and Vegetables; Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Foreign Communities; Furnishing the House; Plague; *Politics and Warfare*: War and Civilians; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Taverns and Inns; *Religion and Beliefs*: Christian Art in the Home; Pilgrims and Shrines; *Science and Technology*: Glassmaking; *Primary Document*: The Merchant's Inventory: Luca Pacioli. "What an Inventory Is and How to Make It." *The Rules of Double-Entry Bookkeeping: Particularis de computis et scripturis* (1494)

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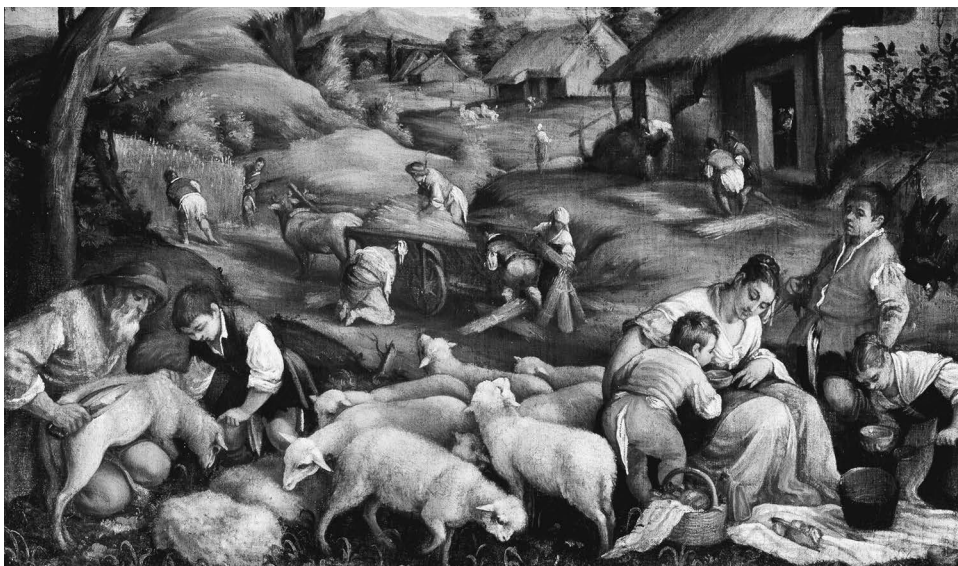
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Seaborne Trade. *See* Trade, Seaborne

SHEEP AND WOOL ECONOMY IN THE SOUTH

Sheep and shepherds were found throughout Renaissance-era Italy and Sicily. Sheep provided not only yield after yield of raw wool—on average seven to nine years’ worth—but lambs, milk, cheese, and ultimately, meat. A single shepherd could oversee some 200 sheep, so raising them was quite labor-efficient. In the absence of a well-organized woolen cloth industry, local manufacturers could make do with locally grown wool. In major markets such as Milan, Florence, and Siena, however, manufacturers competed in international markets throughout Europe and demanded the best Europe had to offer. English wool, grown in a climate colder than Italy’s, was considered the premier product until the Hundred Years’ War interfered with supply. Spain bred its Castilian sheep with a prime North African breed to produce Merino wool, which captured England’s market share. When Alfonso of Aragon took over the Kingdom of Naples in the 1440s, he brought Merino sheep and upbred the local Italian stock, putting it on a par with imports. He also reorganized the structure within which sheep were raised and their wool sold. Soon, the tax on wool was the kingdom’s greatest single source of income.

Sheep graze on land that can vary from very fertile to marginal. The Apennine Mountains provide fine marginal land during the summers, and owners of flocks owned or held extensive grazing land on both slopes. The problem was that during the inclement winters sheep needed to be led down to grazing lands closer to the coasts, a process called transhumance. Those who owned the sheep did not own this land, but had to rent it from landowners who otherwise grew cash crops on it. Since people needed the food crops, and the states needed the cash from sheep taxes, medieval authorities, such as the Papacy and Naples’ rulers stepped in to negotiate and maximize benefits. Before 1289 the popes had run the “customhouse (*dogana*) for pastures,” an authority that controlled private and papal winter grazing land from Rome to Umbria and Tuscany. It also oversaw several annual spring



In his *Summer: Sheep Shearing* (ca. 1575, oil on canvas), Venetian painter Francesco Bassano (1549–1592) romanticizes the effort expended in harvesting the annual crop on which so many in eastern and southern Italy depended. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

fairs at which the raw wool, cheese, and other products were sold and sheep owners paid their taxes. After lurching through the papal absence in the fourteenth century, the *dogana* was revitalized by Pope Nicholas V in 1452. By the mid-1450s, about 100,000 sheep went through this process annually, returning to their upland summer pastures in April.

Nicholas acted in part because his biggest rival in the wool trade, the Kingdom of Naples, had reorganized its procedures for transhumance and taxation. Alfonso took control of the private lowland grazing areas, even those privately owned, and made state authorities the middlemen between their owners and the woolly snowbirds who descended each fall. His was the *Dogana* of Foggia, a town in Capitanata in Puglia, at the center of the sheep-growing region of the eastern Apennine slope. Here the vice royal *doganiere* (customhouse administrator) managed a small army of officials who assigned appropriate grazing sites to each group of shepherds that arrived downslope each fall. He arbitrated disputes and handled complaints, and saw to the fair weighing of the freshly sheared wool each spring, and to its fair sale at the annual fair. His territory was a large arc around Foggia. Most—about 70%—of his business came from the north in the Abruzzi, with smaller percentages from the west and south.

From early May through late September sheep owners had their shepherds—the only commoners allowed to carry guns—watch over their flocks on the owners' own or rented land. According to doganal records, most owners had small flocks of

around 200 sheep, though large monasteries and land barons could have upwards of 2,000 animals, divided into 200-sheep flocks. Come late September, thousands of shepherds began the 200- to 700-kilometer trek along royally administered sheep-walks, led by panpipes and drums. The main lines were 111 meters wide and created a right-of-way across royal and private property alike. Secondary walks were 27 meters wide, and both had pasture areas for grazing at intervals all along. The initial terminus was a huge holding area at which the shepherd was interviewed and assigned an appropriate area and rental agreement by a state official. Here he would set up his hut and wait until late March.

In a good year some 5,000 to 6,000 shepherds brought 1,000,000 or more sheep to winter pastures around Foggia, some ten times the volume handled by the papal *dogana*. Before Alfonso's changes, the Angevin authorities in Naples counted some 200,000 taxed sheep. He doubled this to 425,000 by 1445; by 1449 there were 925,000 sheep processed; and in 1474 some 1,700,000. In that year, however, 700,000 died because of poor land management by the royal authorities, and numbers fell back. Contributions to the royal treasury also increased, from 38,500 ducats in 1445 to 103,000 ducats five years later. The royal investment certainly paid off.

Those who owned the flocks and paid the taxes and their shepherds were organized into what was called the *generalità*, translated variously as commune, republic, or guild. It was a form of the Spanish *mesta*, and allowed the state to deal with the sheep owners as a group, and vice versa. They could flex their muscle when provoked, as in 1563, when 700 descended on Naples to complain, and in 1583 when they helped get all of the royal wool weighers jailed for corruption. Neither they nor their gun-toting employees were the stuff of Arcadian pastoral poetry.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Cloth Trade; Clothmaking; Taxes and Public Finance; Trade Routes, Overland; *Fashion and Appearance*: Fabrics, Domestic; *Food and Drink*: Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy; *Politics and Warfare*: Contado and Subject Towns; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; *Science and Technology*: Agriculture and Agronomy

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SLAVES AND SLAVERY

Italians held slaves before the Renaissance era, but the heavy demographic blow of the Black Death beginning in 1348 created a new level of demand. In northern Italy aristocratic and merchant-class homes utilized the service of women brought by Genoese and Venetian slavers from their trading centers in the Black Sea and Aegean. By 1500, however, most of these outposts had been swept away by the Turks. Tatars, Circassians, Russians, Abkhazians, and Turks were replaced by Moorish and Berber women from North Africa, as well as black Africans sold through North African and Portuguese markets. Just as Genoese Christopher Columbus aided Spain's royal authorities with enslaved Spanish Muslim captives after Granada's fall in 1492, so Italian merchants such as Florentine Bartolomeo Marchionni conducted trade in Senegalese and Guinean slaves between Lisbon and Valencia and Lisbon and Livorno, Italy. Between 1493 and 1495 he handled a total of some 1,648 slaves; and from 1489 to 1503 he sent 1,866 to Valencia alone. By the later fifteenth century 83% of Aragonese Naples' slaves were black Africans, and most male slaves imported into Sicily for agricultural labor were black. Between 1350 and 1460 Muslim North African slaves made up between 10% and 12% of the city's population. At the same time a taste developed for black African slaves/servants of both sexes at northern Italian courts such as Milan, Ferrara, and Mantua. Black figures took their places in ducal frescoes and panel paintings in quite visible, if subservient, roles.

Across Italy perhaps 1% to 3% of the population consisted of slaves, a bit more if the Genoese and Venetian colonies are included. Florence legalized the owning of slaves as property in 1364 in the wake of the Black Death and, two years later, began recording sales of non-Christian slaves. Between 1366 and 1397 merchants or owners sold 357, almost all of whom were women or girls. Females were more expensive than males, selling for about twice the price of a male. The Florentine census of 1427 listed 360 female slaves, about 1% of the total population; at the same time the 7,400 Pisans owned eight (5 women, 3 men) slaves. Genoese owned 4,000 to 5,000 slaves in the later 1300s, a figure that dropped to 2,000 within decades. This was still 4%–5% of its population, but the percentage dropped to 3% by 1458. Here the state reserved the right to borrow slaves for communal projects, and prohibited owners from manumitting (freeing) slaves through wills, lest slaves kill their masters to attain their freedom.

Slaves resisted masters in numerous ways, from murder to running away. Laws throughout Italy forbade aiding runaways, who could be branded on the face in Venice and Genoa. More common offenses were disobedience, lying, damaging property, and stealing. Genoa in fact prohibited citizens from buying keys, clothing, gold, silver, jewelry, or gems from known slaves. For their part masters in the north were largely unfettered in how they could treat their slaves, though a master

was banished from Venice for killing his slave. Physical abuse was expected, and even rape was tolerated. In northern Italian cities sexual abuse of female slaves was so common that a quarter to a third of identified infants left in homes for abandoned children were the offspring of slaves. Lactating women slaves were often rented to such institutions or to other families in need of wet nurses. Renters usually provided shelter, food, drink, clothes, and shoes as needed.

In the south rules were different, stemming in part from the more humane legislation of thirteenth-century Emperor Frederick II. Slaves were closer to serfs in status, and enjoyed similar protections, at least in theory. Physical abuse was limited, rape forbidden, and male slaves could sue and even own property. The regional difference may also have been due to the fact that a much higher percentage of southern slaves were males delegated to agricultural labor. Northern households typically owned one to three female domestic slaves, with more at the courts of the powerful (though the Medici in Florence listed only four in 1457). Cardinal Luigi d'Este at his lavish estate of Tivoli south of Rome kept 80 slaves to maintain the extensive grounds and structures, until they rebelled in 1580. These he replaced with 50 new ones.

As a whole, the Church supported slavery as a natural result of the fallen human condition. Saints Augustine and Thomas Aquinas supported it. Popes Nicholas V and Alexander VI stated that reducing "enemies of Christ" to servitude, with an eye to converting them, was wholly defensible. Popes Martin V and Paul II, on the other hand, excommunicated slave traders, while humanist Pius II called slavery a grave evil. In southern Italy, Jesuits strove to integrate specifically black African slaves and freed people into Italian Christian society not only by baptizing them but also by educating them in the faith. Adult baptisms were festive occasions accompanied by singing and pageantry. Slaves even joined their own confraternities, and some entered religious life once freed. One black friar in Palermo became St. Benedetto il Moro, recognized for his humility. The Church also addressed enslavement of Italians captured at sea or in coastal raids by Barbary pirates. Ongoing collections for ransoming these captives were established in Naples (1548), Rome (1581), Venice (1586), and Palermo (1596).

See also: *Arts:* Non-Europeans in Art; *Economics and Work:* Trade, Seaborne; *Family and Gender:* Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing; Last Wills and Testaments; Servants, Household; *Fashion and Appearance:* Livery; Social Status and Clothing; *Housing and Community:* Palazzi; Villas

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SPICE TRADE

The wealthy Italian's table and medicine cabinet featured a wide range of spices grown in the tropics and shipped by boat and caravan from Arabia, India, and Indonesia. Until about 1500 all of it moved through Arabia or Persia to the eastern Mediterranean ports in Muslim nations or Constantinople/Istanbul. In their warehouses at Alexandria, Beirut, and Tripoli, Italian merchants from Pisa, Genoa, and Venice, and by 1400 Venice all but alone, awaited the seasonal cargoes. Laden with their precious aromatics and medicines, as well as luxury cloths and other fine goods, Christian oar-driven galleys, or increasingly wind-powered round ships, worked their way back to home port. Here wholesalers prepared the goods for land or sea trips to Germany, France, England, and Scandinavia, and local spice retailers—Venice had 122 in 1569—and apothecaries replenished their stores.

This trade was shaped by several key events during the Renaissance. The mid-fourteenth-century overland silk road was cut off by the Mongol Tamerlane's conquests; in 1453 Christian control of Constantinople came to an end with Turkish conquest; in 1498 Vasco da Gama linked Portugal directly to the trade's source by rounding southern Africa; during the mid-1500s the Turks seized many Venetian eastern Mediterranean colonies; and later in the sixteenth century the Dutch wrested control of the ocean routes from Portugal. The potential rewards were

huge: an historian has estimated that in 1400 the 3 or 4 million well-off Christian Europeans consumed 2 million pounds of pepper and a million pounds of other imported spices every year. In Prato, near Florence, in the 1390s pepper sold for about a lira per pound, cloves for four and a half, and saffron for nearly 10 lire per pound. Despite high prices demand rose during the fifteenth century: mace by 500% and ginger between 200 and 300%. In 1496–1498 cloves garnered Venetian merchants a 72% profit and nutmeg up to 400%. Beyond the Alps, prices climbed another 50% to 75% with overland shipping costs. From the early 1400s Venice had an annual fleet serving England and the Netherlands.

During the 1400s Venetians controlled nearly all of this. Their foreign warehouses, or *fondachi*, were large two-story structures built around a courtyard. Alessandro Magno wrote of his 1561 trip to Alexandria to sell Italian silk and purchase spices. The 1,500-mile voyage took 30 days. He stayed at the Venetian *fondaco*, which was locked by Egyptian police each night. He hated the months-long wait. The Arabian port of Jeddah received cargoes from India, Ethiopia, and Indonesia, and at 500 pounds per camel the caravan trip of scores of camels to Alexandria lasted two months. Cheaper spices arrived in 100-pound sacks; cinnamon in 50-pound boxes wrapped in canvas; and cloves in large sealed jars. After dickering and loading into round ships that carried some 250 tons each, and the slow, late fall sea voyage, Alessandro returned to Venice after an absence of nearly a year.

From China came granulated sugar, a type of cinnamon, and so-called China wood, which was used to treat gout and syphilis in the sixteenth century. Northeastern India supplied long pepper, which grew wild, and India's south black and white pepper, while Java, Sumatra, and Madagascar also contributed black pepper. India grew most of the five types of exported ginger, including the best from Malabar, but early on the West Indies also became a supplier. Grains of paradise, Benin pepper, and cubeb pepper, used against gonorrhea, originated in West Africa, and cinnamon or the similar cassia in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. The Spice Islands of Molucca in Indonesia produced mace, nutmeg, and cloves. Javanese and Malay boats moved the goods to Malaysia, and Indians to southern India's "pepper coast," where shippers from other production centers also gathered. Arab dhows took much by sea to Jeddah in Arabia for the trip north to Alexandria, while other shipments moved through India's Gujarat to Baghdad and either the Black Sea or Damascus, or from Gujarat to the Persian Gulf.

During the fifteenth century 1 kilogram of pepper cost 2 grams of silver in India and sold for 14 to 18 grams in Venice. In England prices rose to 20 to 30 grams. Here Venetian merchants were all but guaranteed a 40% profit. In 1496–1498 one ducat's worth of cloves purchased in the Moluccas returned 100 ducats at the Rialto market in Venice. Everyone won.

Edible spices were both foods and medicines in the West, and were accompanied by aromatic medicines such as balm costus from Kashmir, and from the Hindu-Kush spikenard, which was used in topical medicines and perfumes. From Arabia came balsam wood, resin, and seeds; from Borneo camphor; and from Malaysia sandalwood.

Portugal's end run around Africa hurt Venetians badly. By 1503 Portuguese were selling to Genoa, and the following year Venetians found no spices for sale in Alexandria or Beirut. Venice banned spice imports from Genoa, but in 1515 they caved in and purchased Portuguese imports. Although spices travel well, they did better crossing the dry deserts than on long damp sea voyages. As well, Portuguese ships were subject to pirates and shipwreck, and thieves reduced profits. By mid-century, however, Venice was again king of Mediterranean spice trade. In 1554 its fleets shipped 336 tons of spices from Alexandria alone, and the weight doubled to 672 tons annually between 1560 and 1564. By the 1580s some 4,000 resident merchant families lived in Arab entrepôts from Baghdad to Cairo, with 16 trading companies in Aleppo alone in the 1590s. In the 1570s, Florence tried to move in on Portuguese pepper in the Mediterranean but failed. After Spain absorbed Portugal in 1580 Philip II tried but failed to entice Venetian ships to Lisbon to buy their pepper.

See also: Economics and Work: Apothecaries; Retail Selling; Trade, Seaborne; Trade Routes, Overland; *Family and Gender:* Fertility, Conception, and Contraception; *Fashion and Appearance:* Dyes and Dyestuffs; Scents and Perfumes; *Food and Drink:* Diet and Social Status; Drugs; Food Preservation; Galenic Health Regimens; Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices; Sugar and Confectioned Sweets; *Housing and Community:* Plague; *Science and Technology:* Pharmacopeias and Materia Medica; Plague Treatises and Consilia; Ships and Shipbuilding

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TAXES AND PUBLIC FINANCE

No one wants to pay taxes, but civilization depends upon them. The real question is how the burden of taxation is distributed within a society and who decides how

much each person pays. If this system seems rational and fair, then most folk will accept it, if not without grumbling. If the system favors one group over others, or is open to blatant corruption or manipulation, then resistance can take the form of everything from avoidance to rebellion. In the Italian republics processes were rational because the ruling groups were taxing themselves as well as their neighbors. The decision makers owned property, business interests, government bonds like all other taxpayers, and sought to balance the incidence of the tax burden as reasonably as possible. How the decision makers in the major cities treated the people in subject towns, who had to support two tax bases, raises other issues.

The sources of income for republican governments fall into four distinct categories: direct taxes on real and personal property or income; indirect taxes on imports, exports, goods in transit, or consumer goods such as food; rents, user



Siena named its tax-collecting agency the Biccherna for Constantinople's Blachernae Palace, which housed the Byzantine Empire's treasury. From the 14th century, Biccherna account book covers were decorated with painted images of the officials at work behind their counters, usually accompanied by heraldic shields of the men in charge and sometimes poetry. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

fees, penalties, fines, and income from monopolies (especially salt); and loans to the government at interest.

Civic governments were usually forced to borrow money during bad economic periods, wars, plagues, famines, and other disasters. Merchant-bankers and cash-rich institutions such as hospitals made such loans, and Jewish communities were often forced to make loans by their Christian host cities. Forced loans from the wealthy, known as *preste* or *prestanze* in Tuscany, paid the immediate bills for mercenary soldiers or grain shipments. In fourteenth-century Siena the value of wealthier people's property was assessed (*alliramento*) and the loan rate set at 1 or 2 florins per thousand. These assessments occurred about every seven or eight years from 1355 to 1400. Between 1354 and 1399 the Sienese levied at least 92 loans on themselves, 14 in the year 1390 alone. Returns varied but were higher if the person voluntarily loaned the money. In Venice, neighborhood *capi* (leaders) appointed by the doge did the assessing, and about one in eight households was tapped. Early Venetian forced loans returned 2.5% per year interest, and in Florence, the Monte ("mountain"), as the public debt fund was known, paid 5% to 7% per year. Florentines' wealth was estimated by a committee of men from each parish who based their judgments on reputation and gossip, making the *estimo* a less than rational process. By the 1370s this was the city's main source of revenue, but great was the grumbling. Between 1427 and 1495 the government adopted a self-reporting system called a *catasto*. In his or her *catasto* return the head of the household recorded all assets, including real property, shares in businesses, household goods, cash, farm equipment, and so on. The householder then deducted all liabilities, from debts owed to business losses to children (literally "mouths"). The result was net taxable wealth, on which about 0.5% was paid in the form of a loan.

The *alliramento* or *catasto* was also the basis for the direct taxation of real property or wealth. While the well-off were hit up for forced loans, all real property owners paid the Sienese *dazio* or the Florentine *decima*. In the sixteenth century the *decima* was Florence's main source of revenue, and was graduated so that the larger landowners paid a higher rate. Another direct tax was that on salaries or wages, like the American income tax. Siena charged this, but Venice avoided direct taxes of all kinds until necessity forced them. By 1500 direct taxes accounted for about 15% of Venetian public revenue.

Indirect taxes were usually tapped to pay off the interest on the public debt. These were often known as gabelles and were taxes of set rates on such things as notarial contracts, sales of consumer goods, goods in transit, imports and exports going through city gates, and food processing, such as slaughtering meat or grinding grain. In 1572 the tax collecting office in Brescia, a subject city of Venice, took in 95,000 ducats from indirect taxes: 38% came from taxes on grinding grain. High gabelles assessed by Venice on the components of firearms all but wrecked

that industry in Brescia. The power to tax is the power to destroy. In a city such as Venice, however, even small percentages added up quickly when the volume of business was huge. Transactions at the Rialto market and the German *Fondaco* (business center) were taxed at a rate of less than 1%, yet in 1500 gabelles amounted to 230,000 ducats.

The small town of Pescia about 30 miles from Florence was under its control from 1339. Pescia paid a steady stream of money to Florence in the form of taxes to support Florentine troops, gabelles on transactions and commodities, and direct taxes that included the ordinary tax, an annual levy whose amount was set in Florence. Collections were made by tax farmers, men who contracted to collect the amount expected by the dominant city and who were paid out of what surplus they could collect. A study based on the 1427 catasto, which included Pesciatini, determined that all things considered, while Florentines paid 8 to 9% of their total wealth in taxes, Pesciatini, though taxed by both cities, paid only 3.5%.

Defaulters who could or would not pay their share had a few options. In 1447, of 126 delinquent Florentine patricians 45 emigrated, 40 hid out in the countryside, 40 were “fugitives”—perhaps skulking in their own palazzi—and 1 went to jail.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Credit and Loans; *Food and Drink:* Food-sellers and Markets; *Housing and Community:* Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare:* Armies; Citizenship; Contado and Subject Towns; Mercenaries; Rebellions and Revolts; Urban Councils and Assemblies; War and Civilians

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TRADE, SEABORNE

As the next entry on overland trade points out, moving commercial goods by pack animals was expensive, dangerous, time consuming, and often necessary. Whenever they could, Italians shipped goods by water routes, whether down rivers on flat-bottomed barges or to the Baltic Sea in great roundships such as carracks. In

terms of international trade, a great deal was seaborne, only the Alpine passes providing overland routes, and at that largely to the Holy Roman Empire, Switzerland, and Hungary. Italy's position astride the Mediterranean, its long coastline, and several very good harbors—including Genoa, Pisa, Livorno, Civitavecchia, Naples, Palermo, Messina, Ancona, Bari, and Venice—made it a natural sea power. Of course, there was no “Italy” as a political entity, so competition among its city-states and larger powers could be as brutal as that with outsiders.

At the beginning of the Renaissance era Venice and Genoa were the dominant merchant marine states in Italy. Pisa and Amalfi had earlier competed and been defeated, and Florence was landlocked. Naples could have been a major player, but its Angevin and Aragonese masters diverted its resources. Genoa and Venice had long exploited the weaknesses of the powers in the eastern Mediterranean, including the Mamluks in Egypt, the Turks, and the Byzantines. The Italians had carved out trading posts, colonies, emporia, and vaguer spheres of commercial influence in the Aegean and Black Seas. Early Renaissance-era Muslim ports such as Beirut, Tripoli, and Alexandria accepted the raw materials and few manufactured goods, such as Florentine light woollens and Venetian glass, that the Italian cogs and galleys delivered in exchange for spices, silks, and other high-value luxury goods.

Four wars had settled Genoa's fate. After the early 1380s, Venice had a near-monopoly in Near Eastern trade. Around 1400, Venice also started down the road to carving out a mainland empire (*Terraferma*), which provided it with goods its merchants could trade with their eastern partners. In the fifteenth century Venetians relied heavily on great galleys that could handle cargoes of over 300 tons. Galleys relied on both wind and rowers, which meant that they carried 200 to 300 men in addition to passengers. Most of the rowers were free men and given a weapon when the need arose, so few of the ever larger number of pirates dared attack. For some of the oarsmen the trips were a form of apprenticeship in foreign trade, an opportunity to see and experience the markets with which they would later be working. Also, they could make purchases of spices, silks, metal-ware, or other goods in small amounts for personal use or for resale back home.

The Genoese relied on privately owned craft, space on which was purchased by merchants. The Venetian state built its galleys in the Arsenale shipyard, owned the vessels, and provided space to merchants who, after all, had paid taxes to help build galleys. Venetian international merchants were a noble and basically closed group, into which few new members were allowed. The state galleys operated as fleets or convoys, whose departure and return dates and routes were usually quite predictable. All Venetian ships traveled to Corfu and then to their various destinations, returning along the same routes. The Galleys of Alexandria visited Crete before landing at the Egyptian port. The Galleys of Beirut took a northern route to Rhodes, Cyprus, and Tripoli in Syria. The Galleys of Romania entered the Aegean

and stopped at Constantinople on their way to Kaffa in the Crimea and Tana at the mouth of the Don River. Others in this fleet stopped at Sinope and Trebizond, the old end points of the Silk Road. Three fleets plied the western Mediterranean, thumbing their noses at the Genoese and prompting the Florentines to begin developing a merchant fleet in the 1420s after they had taken Livorno and Pisa and its port. One Venetian fleet coasted the western Italian coast, Marseilles, Barcelona, and Valencia. Another dropped south from Sicilian Syracuse to the Barbary coast of North Africa and west to southern Spain and Valencia. The most famous fleet was that of Flanders, which left Palermo for Majorca, sailed past Gibraltar, and headed north for Southampton, London, Bruges, and later Antwerp. This last fleet opened the door to maritime trade with ports as far from Italy as Danzig and Hamburg, and ultimately drew the Dutch and English into the Mediterranean. At the same time, the newly developed Turkish empire blocked much Venetian activity, and even gave the Genoese a plum position in Istanbul. Venetian colonies rapidly disappeared, but the fleets continued to sail.

Galleys were not efficient for cheaper and large bulk commodities, such as grain or sheep's raw wool, so the so-called roundships, such as cogs, later carracks and galleons, moved these goods around. Larger ships could double the payload of the typical great galley. Though nowhere near as interesting as English worsted woolens or exotic Indonesian spices, wheat was a major cargo on both coastal and seagoing ships. Italian cities needed grain to feed their growing populations, and ships were the only reasonable means of transport. War and famines made shortages acute in many cities, and Venice is said to have maintained 44 granaries to ward off shortages.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; Cloth Trade; Grain Trade; Imported Goods, Sources of; Sheep and Wool Economy in the South; Spice Trade; Trade Routes, Overland; *Fashion and Appearance:* Fabrics, Imported; *Food and Drink:* Grains and the Wheat Market; *Politics and Warfare:* Navies and Naval Warfare; *Science and Technology:* Navigational Tools; Ships and Shipbuilding

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TRADE ROUTES, OVERLAND

Moving goods by land was far more expensive than by water. Whenever possible, Renaissance-era Italians utilized water routes, including rivers, lakes, coastal waters, and the open sea. Where these were not an option, with small cargoes short distances could be covered on foot leading pack animals or driving a cart pulled by oxen, mules, or horses. Longer distances and larger shipments generally required a pack train of mules. Would carts have been better conveyances? The problem was with Europe's roadways. The ancient Romans had constructed and maintained an excellent system of surfaced roads, with better conditions the closer one got to the capital. Because trade and regular travel were not characteristics of the early medieval peoples, and because there was no effective central authority, Italy's road system was left to decay. Its once-smooth surfaces became pitted and then cratered, and often impassible except on foot. And that went for animals as well. This is also a reason why medieval and Renaissance-era travelers never adopted the chariot. Wheeled vehicles were simply too susceptible to damage, especially if loaded with heavy goods. The problem was multiplied if the trip involved crossing mountains, whether the Apennines or Alps.

Nonetheless, Classical Rome's roadway system remained largely in place, and had been faithfully followed by pilgrims, soldiers, merchants, migrants, and others throughout the Middle Ages. Naturally, the major trunk lines ran north-south on both sides of the Apennines. Bridges had generally been maintained by local barons and then by city governments who understood the value of intact transportation routes. They brought food, raw materials, imported goods, immigrants, and cash into local economies, and provided the routes that exports took in the possession of customers or to make money for their makers. Pack animals could negotiate shallow streams effectively, but required sound bridges for crossing rivers. Along main routes where there were no bridges, there were usually ferrymen with sturdy flat-bottomed boats on which the animals crossed one at a time.

A commercial trip of many days or even weeks presented dangers from accident, natural cause, and people. Accidents befell the drovers, but also their animals. Crossing streams with slippery beds was especially tricky, despite the sure-footedness of the animals. The carriers themselves became cranky, sick, and injured, and their handlers were bitten and kicked. Spring floods could make entire regions impossible to cross. Extremes of nature, from ice and snow to searing heat, provided dangers of their own. Crossing the Alps north into Germany, Switzerland, and Austria was fraught with threats, including unexpectedly early or late snows, frozen sources of water, and avalanches. Passage could be blocked for months, meaning added costs and late arrival. Warnings about the presence of plague, either ahead or from where the train had just come, could also block passage or cause

a major detour. Over time, border guards became increasingly proficient at intercepting potentially plague-carrying cargoes, and at keeping plague-free people and goods from entering stricken areas.

And, of course, there were people to cause problems, beside the guards. Much of urban northern and central Italy had neutered its medieval rural nobility, who had enjoyed and profited from interfering with commercial traffic passing through or near its territories. Much of the south, Sicily, and extreme northwest and northeast Italy, however, remained home to predatory barons. These same areas, and parts of the northern Apennine Mountains, were also the lairs of *banditi* and other freebooting thugs who descended on the unsuspecting. At times, rebellious mountain folk and other normally law-abiding rural dwellers presented threats to traders, whose harassment they saw as resulting not only in booty but a blow against their oppressive urban masters. During wartime, undisciplined mercenaries and foreign soldiers posed threats. Many of these people were as likely to kill the drovers as not. Less life-threatening were corrupt officials collecting too much in tolls or other fees, or innkeepers or ferrymen who overcharged or stole from cargoes.

The major land routes into and out of Italy flowed north-south through the Alpine passes. The network stretched out from Venice in the east along a trunk linking it with Verona and Milan. Due north from and to Venice came goods and merchants to and from Austria and Hungary through Treviso and Pontebba. From Treviso north was the route to the Brenner Pass through Belluno. Another route to the Brenner ran northwest from Treviso through Trent and Bolzano; Trent could also be approached from Verona, which was due south. The Brenner was the gateway to the south German cities, and a major conduit for books, spices, glassware, imported cloth, Protestantism, and technical expertise in many areas. From Milan and other points west, the route was through Brescia and Bergamo and north through the Valtellina Valley. From Sondrio one moved due north to Switzerland or east through the Stelvio Pass to the Brenner Pass and Germany. Basle and western Swiss cities were reached through the St. Gotthard Pass, from Milan through Como and Bellinzona. Finally, the westernmost pass was the Great St. Bernard. It was approached from Milan through Novara and Aosta, and took one to Geneva and ultimately France.

Traveling through these routes added a large percentage to the final costs of goods, whether paid in Italy or northern Europe. That volumes and values of shipments continued to increase across the period is a testament to the wealth and taste that developed on both sides of the Alps.

See also: Economics and Work: Cloth Trade; Grain Trade; Trade, Seaborne; *Housing and Community:* Plague; Transportation, Local; *Politics and Warfare:* Contado and Subject Towns; Rebellions and Revolts; War and Civilians

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WAGES AND PRICES

Untangling the snarl that is the current knowledge of comparative wages and prices for the 250 years of the Italian Renaissance era is no easy matter. While there is a good deal of data, it is often for one place and for a limited amount of time, or for a certain occupation. The use of multiple currencies adds a layer of complexity. While wages and prices for one place at one time use the same currency of value, these can differ significantly over time and among different places. Prices are usually expressed in terms of certain measures of wheat, though that measure can differ from place to place, and wheat differs in quality and therefore is not a stable commodity. Even a florin was not a florin, as its value in lire and soldi could fluctuate from one week to the next: contracts often specified the value of the florin at the time signed. Despite the problems with undertaking close economic analysis of standards of living, aggregate rough estimates can help paint pictures that are probably close to the truth.

First, a few broad strokes. Wages were not the same as income. The wealthy made income from professional services and investments, including business ventures, interest on loans, rents, or sales of property. Salaries were paid for periods of service, monthly or annually. The specific services expected and the terms of payment were often laid out in a contract. Whether one worked hard or slacked off and put in 40 or 60 hours per week made no difference as the salary was set. A wage was usually paid for a day's work, and this is what normally appears in modern studies. If one did not show up, he or she was not paid. During the winter, daylight hours were fewer so days were shorter than during the summer. Until clocks appeared and numbers of hours rather than "days" became the rule, a long day's wage was no different from that of a short day. Adjusting for Sundays and religious festivals, an average year included 270 working days, so an annual wage was simply 270 times the daily wage rate.

Wages and prices had traditionally been considered not according to market forces, but according to what theologians understood as “just.” In fact, if a skill was rare but needed, its owner was paid well; if a commodity was in great supply, it was cheaper than if it was scarce. Higher-quality products demanded higher prices than low-quality goods. The market worked, even if contemporaries did not see or acknowledge it.

Our era opens with the Black Death, which eliminated 30% to 50% of wage and salary earners. It also reduced the number of people demanding goods and services, and the number harvesting and then planting food crops. Workers had to be drawn to depopulated cities, and higher wages were the best way to do so. In very general terms, wages rose faster than prices for necessary goods, including grain. Most rural agricultural workers—peasants—did not earn wages for their farm labor, so many migrated to the cities, while others moved to places that had the most favorable working and living conditions. Poor land was abandoned, and the normal flow of food remained high. In Florence, this was the pattern: higher wages and stable prices meant a good standard of living. Venice saw a larger jump in wages (up to 200%) after 1350 (the Black Death), so more people could buy more and better things. This gave typical Venetian wage earners the highest standard of living in a major Italian city. Milan, a huge city run by a *signore* (lord) and little affected by the initial plague outbreak, saw little increase in wages. By 1460, Milanese construction workers were making 30% to 50% less than their Venetian counterparts. Prices remained high, and tended to rise more quickly than wages did, making for a comparatively poor standard of living. The absence of the papacy, its court, and its business made Rome a backwater until almost the mid-1400s. The city was filled with foreigners from other parts of Italy and abroad, so unskilled locals worked as servants or made cloth or worked in construction. This was one sector that eventually boomed, as work on palazzi, villas, and churches satisfied the egos of barons, bankers, cardinals, and popes.

By about 1470, despite recurring plague, populations in cities began to grow from natural increase and in-migration. Much of the increase in demand for luxury goods was met by skilled artisans and merchants, with little trickling down to the laboring classes. As a result, wages fell in value relative to food prices, which were rising at the time. Finding work was harder than it had been, and the incidence of begging and vagabondage increased across Italy. The sixteenth century saw the same pattern continue, and even if wages did not tend to fall, what we understand as inflation undermined their value in the marketplace.

This pattern was found in cities across Europe, so workers in Italy were not alone. Goldthwaite (*Economy of Renaissance Florence*, 365) provides a graph of this decline for unskilled construction workers in Florence in terms of their daily wage’s ability to pay for a *staio* (24.7 dry liters) of wheat. In 1350, after the

Black Death, a day's wage could buy 0.3 of a staio, but wheat's value was rising. By the mid-1360s it had risen steeply to 0.65. It fell again, dipping below 0.3 in the mid-1380s, but climbing and staying relatively high between 0.4 and 0.7 until about 1470. Thereafter, with occasional upticks and plateaus it fell steadily. During famine years around 1590 it reached its nadir at about 0.10. Another way of looking at wages is in 1527 unskilled Florentine workers made half of what skilled ones did (9 soldi to 18 soldi); 20 years later, Venetian laborers were making about two-thirds what skilled craftsmen did. Without price indexing, however, there is no way of telling which city's laborers were really better off.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Construction, Building; Grain Trade; *Family and Gender:* Families, Laboring Class; *Food and Drink:* Diet and Social Status; Grains and the Wheat Market; *Housing and Community:* Plague; Villages and Village Life

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WOMEN IN THE LABOR FORCE

Women played many roles in the Renaissance-era Italian economy. Elite women bore children, helped in raising them, directed servants and slaves, commissioned art, healed sick family members, entertained guests, and filled their husbands' shoes when they were away or unable. Wives of merchants kept books and helped in shops, and lower down some adopted their husbands' or fathers' crafts. All of these ran their households and raised their children, both of which were financially uncompensated contributions to a city's economy. In the countryside, women's unpaid household and field labor was indispensable. They worked beside fathers, brothers, and husbands and helped bring goods to market and sell them. Wives and daughters in artisanal families also sold family products from behind the counter.

Women played at least as many roles for which they were directly paid. Perhaps the largest sector was cloth-making. In wool manufacturing girls and women did all of the spinning and many simpler weaving and related tasks. Girls and

women were vital to all early stages in silk production, from tending the worms to weaving simpler fabrics to wrapping silk thread with gold for rich brocades and cloth-of-gold. In Umbria and Le Marche women worked with cotton: picking, cleaning, spinning, washing, and weaving. In flax-growing regions women helped in the production of linen. Most of this work was put-out: left by contractors with women at their homes or institutional residences to work on as they could.

In wealthier homes women acted as servants, slaves, nannies, and wet nurses. Many wet nurses worked in their own homes in town or in the countryside. Humbler homes might have a female servant or two—in 1427 almost half of Florentine households had at last one—who combined cooking, cleaning, shopping, fetching water, and doing other domestic tasks. Many household servants were little more than girls accumulating funds toward their dowries. Many of these were wards of institutions such as foundling homes or orphanages.

Many women performed specific services on an as-needed basis. Some had accumulated herb-lore and therapeutic techniques that made them valuable healers, especially for those who could not afford or did not trust educated physicians or pharmacists. Iconic among these women were midwives, who participated in preparing women of all classes for the event, directing the presentation, and tending to the new mother. Though all mothers theoretically taught their daughters to sew, independent female seamstresses and tailors found work among unmarried males and others who could not handle desired repairs or alterations at home. When clothing and linens became soiled enough to launder, women took up the task. Lower-class housewives or daughters and servants in upper-class homes and institutions probably did most of this tiresome work, but larger cities also had women who did laundry for an income.

No survey of women service workers would be complete without mention of women in the sex trade. These ranged from unattractive peasant prostitutes to educated and wealthy urban courtesans who served Venetian nobles, Roman cardinals, and French kings. Some were no doubt driven to the life by violence and poverty; some were born to mothers who traded; and others embraced the life, valuing its independence and rewards. Most Italian communities both reviled and considered these women necessary: without their sexual outlet citizens' wives and unmarried daughters were at risk of molestation. Early fifteenth-century Florentine officials considered them a hedge against raging homosexuality and provided officially sanctioned whorehouses. Other cities followed suite. The most famous courtesans, however, were not simply sex partners but entertainers and intellectual partners to educated and powerful men. They played and sang music, danced, and recited poetry. By the mid-1500s women other than courtesans were beginning to entertain at courts and on stage. Poets sold books of their verses, female musicians

and singers began to be paid for their efforts, and women even appeared on stage from the 1540s.

Nuns in convents and monasteries supplemented their resources in numerous ways. Some taught girls from wealthy families; others specialized in taking in sewing, lacework, or embroidery; producing fine linens, ribbons, and altar vestments; creating high-end manuscripts (even after printing); and molding small devotional statues of terra-cotta or gesso or papier mâché. Some nunneries had reputations for producing quality herbs or medicinal potions, which they sold to apothecaries and physicians. Residents in some houses participated in stages of contracted-out cloth production. Church fathers at the Council of Trent found much of this commercial activity unbecoming of Brides of Christ and had bishops at least scale it back.

See also Arts: Women and the Arts; *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; Clothmaking; Guilds; Putting-Out System; Retail Selling; Slaves and Slavery; *Family and Gender:* Birth and Midwives; Education of Children; Families, Laboring Class; Fertility, Conception, and Contraception; Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing; Servants, Household; Widows; *Fashion and Appearance:* Laundry; Tailors and Seamstresses; *Food and Drink:* Eating Out; *Housing and Community:* Villages and Village Life; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Theater, Popular; *Religion and Beliefs:* Nuns and Nunneries

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FAMILY AND GENDER



INTRODUCTION

The family was the heart and soul of Renaissance-era society. It was the matrix in which the young were raised to adulthood; its traditions defined each generation's understanding of itself; it was the seat of honor for its members, and their source of sustenance, security, and social standing. One's name spoke to ancestry: father, grandfather, cities left behind, occupations abandoned, noble estates vacated or seized. It was hardly surprising that a famous family of Florentine financiers had the name meaning "of the physicians." Even at society's lower end there were few quicker ways to bring on a fight than to insult another's family, lowborn though it might have been.

Families were very fluid organizations. For elites, the palazzo was the physical center of family life. Not merely one generation, but three or even four might occupy its rooms. The paterfamilias and wife might be joined by a mother-in-law, spinster aunts, or disabled uncles; his cousins or his wife's siblings or cousins; his children young and old, orphaned nieces or nephews, and adopted children born to household servants; and his widowed daughter's children. These folks got along with servants, slaves, fostered children, apprentices, friends, business associates, and distantly related visitors and their servants. This cast of characters ebbed and flowed from month to month or even week to week. Daughters and older women entered convents, sons left for university or on a political mission, widows remarried or their children were reclaimed by the father's family, orphans were placed as apprentices, and older sons joined religious orders or left town to conduct family business.

Amid the middle and lower classes family probably had a tighter definition. In fifteenth-century Tuscany their nuclear family sizes were smaller than those



Venetian artist Lorenzo Lotto (1480–1556) here depicts the merchant Giovanni della Volta with his wife and children in 1547. The family's wealth is signaled by the parents' clothing, the rich Turkish carpet, and the expensive cherries that the parents offer the children, whose antics form the work's center. Oil on canvas. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

of elites by about one-third, and typical housing was very limited in its ability to absorb many newcomers. As a couple's family gained more children, they went in search of larger quarters. Older parents, especially fathers, were expected to leave their daughters dowered for marriage and their sons with a patrimony. Often, however, working men left little of value behind, and many needed to be cared for by their children. There was a good deal of social mobility among these classes, at least above the level of the indigent, and sons could outdo their parents in the world's eyes. Even in a village, the well-off could marshal their resources and increase their and their children's economic and social positions.

Renaissance-era Italy was dominated by Catholic males. They ruled the political states and city governments, the Church, and the economy. The father in his family had virtual power of life and death. The women he oversaw were to obey him unquestioningly, and in return he was to seek their best interests—by his lights, of course. Younger males were to defer to and learn from their elders, so that when they held authority they would carry on in an effective and Christian manner. And

so tradition held. Those who did not fit into this paradigm created problems for the Church, families, and governments. Preachers railed against prostitutes, “sodomites,” independent widows, and daughters who eloped. For recalcitrant women, at least, there was always the nunnery.

Today we learn from many types of sources of the families and gender issues of Renaissance-era Italy. While we are perhaps most comfortable with quantitative data that we can unpack and compare, there was precious little produced. The great Florentine Catasto of 1427 was the earliest in-depth look at the Italian (specifically Tuscan) family, and much has been done since its data was computerized. But this was essentially a snapshot. Renaissance-era governments would only go through the bother and expense of compiling finely grained detail for purposes of taxation, and this is just what the catasto and other population censuses were. And so we fall back on more anecdotal sources. A fine one is the *ricordanze* that survive from many heads of households, especially in Tuscany. In a well-kept *ricordanza* every event in the life of a family would have been recorded. Such matters included the steps leading to marriage, the details of the dowry, children born and passed away, major expenditures and business moves, servants hired and fired, civic events witnessed, great sermons heard, political offices held, and so on. Private letters, such as Alessandra Strozzi’s to her sons in exile or Margherita Datini’s to her husband, provide biographical and historical information as well as affective insights into people’s dreams, aspirations, and fears. Legal documents such as last wills tell us about relations within families as well. Testators could be quite candid in dividing up their possessions and planning for their family’s future. Civic laws and the court cases that followed their violation shed light on societal norms and the lengths authorities would go in reinforcing these. Some of this evidence has been used by historians of sex and gender, who have created studies of the contours of such topics as homosexuality, sexual violence, the sex trade, and the legal disabilities that women or sexual minorities faced. Fiction, in the form of novelle and popular theater, regularly poked at the family and its foibles. The seduced daughter, the old cuckold with his young wife, and the dense or too clever servant are stereotypes that drew readers and audiences because they spoke to the common person’s experiences. Finally, families occupied homes, some of which survive or were detailed at the time in plans, paintings, and inventories of possessions. Many of these riches remain untouched and we students, thankfully, have much to do.

Adoption. *See* **Fostering, Step Children, and Adoption**

Annulment. *See* **Divorce, Separation, and Annulment**

BIRTH AND MIDWIVES

Women's reproductive health was more often in the hands of female midwives than male practitioners such as physicians or surgeons. Midwives provided advice on conceiving, blocking conception, and ending pregnancies, and aided women with difficult pregnancies. They were experienced empirics who relied upon their hands-on training, previous cases, and veteran's judgment, as well as collective knowledge of women of the neighborhood or village. Giving birth was a collective enterprise of up to a dozen women orchestrated by the midwife. It was also an all-female experience, unless extraordinary circumstances called for the physician, surgeon, or priest. The husband's appearance was a sign of despair, unless it was after the baby's first wails.

As with other aspects of reproduction, authors of various sorts provided lots of manuals and advice books on giving birth. Recommendations ranged from the idiotic and dangerous to the useful. Italian male medical professionals differed widely in their opinions of midwives. To some they were little better than peasant women who helped calve cows, while to others they were skilled practitioners who would benefit from formal medical training. In 1596 the Roman Dominican friar and physician Girolamo Scipione Mercurio published his *The Midwife*, one of the earliest Italian texts on the subject. Midwives need not have been saints, but they required experience, availability, even temperament, strength along with grace and nimbleness, and good character, including humility and discretion.

“Monstrous” Births

Children born with obvious defects were explained by numerous causes and categorized as less than human. Such infants were often exaggeratedly described as having grotesque deformities from glowing eyes to extra arms or legs. They were attributed to their mothers' having copulated during menstruation, having had sex with a demon or beast, or having had nightmarish visions during pregnancy. Violent sex or certain astral constellations might also explain “monsters,” and people saw them as signs of divine anger or omens of coming disasters. Midwives were expected to smother them at birth, but some parents first put them on display for paying viewers.

When the mother felt the time had come, she hollered for her *brigata* of female friends, relatives, servants, and of course the midwife. Of course, labor could come on under any circumstances, so a woman might find herself in a field, along a road,

or driving a cart. If alone, she may have had to face the birth alone and in far less than sanitary conditions. Even when at home and enjoying the company of half a dozen women (all of whom, according to tradition, should have already given birth at some time), cleanliness was at best an afterthought. Her companions boiled water, gathered towels, whisked children away, informed the father, put the local surgeon and priest on notice, kept the room as warm as possible given the season, held the mother down, and prayed. After the event, they helped clean the mother, her laundry, her child, and the birthing room.

A vomitive or laxative may have helped relieve pressure if the mother's digestive tract was full. Oils or ointments were slathered along the baby's path for lubrication, and the mother's belly was rubbed and massaged. Between contractions the mother was encouraged to walk or stand—or, foolishly, to dance around or jump off a table—to help detach the placenta. To aid gravity and open the birth canal to its widest, the mother and midwife decided on a final stance or position. Crouching and kneeling were natural choices, but some chose standing, sitting, or on all fours: just about anything but laying on her back. Sturdy birthing chairs had been invented in Germany, finding their way south by about 1450. The seat and front were carved out to give open access to vagina and exiting baby, and to the hands of midwife and surgeon if needed. If the baby needed an inducement to exit, foul smells were placed near the mother's nostrils and pleasant ones at her vagina. Some believed the father's natural scent would draw the infant out, and his dirty laundry was placed at the mother's crotch. Midwives directed breathing and exertions while encouraging screams.

And many women did scream. Pain was a part of childbirth, whether terrible or mere discomfort. It was the curse of Eve. Midwives knew fungi and herbs that could lessen this, including henbane, hemlock, ground ivy, and mandrake root, which even looked like a little man. Of course, in the right doses these were toxins and, when ingested, could affect the baby if she were long in coming.

After a successful birth, afterbirth was carefully studied and the full placenta accounted for. Any remaining inside could become toxic. Ancient traditions surrounded placentas, which might be consumed or buried under the house floor or in a garden for fertility. The newborn's skin was carefully cleaned, as was each orifice, the eyes covered against light, and breathing induced. He or she was wrapped in long linen or wool strips of cloth known as swaddling from the feet up. This protective layer kept the child warm and padded against mild accidental blows, restricted random movements, and was believed to help straighten the spine. A bit of wine and theriac flushed the digestive tract. Believed to have lost much necessary bodily heat, the mother was fed chicken broth fortified with dried ham (*prosciutto*) and cinnamon.

Born with the Caul

The caul is the bit of amniotic sac that might adhere to a child's head and shoulders during birth. Italians believed such adhesion was a mark of a specially gifted child. In Friuli, when old enough, males born with the caul—considered an “external soul”—became responsible for protecting villages at harvest time by leaving their bodies and spiritually battling sorcerers and others who would kill animals or wither crops. These *benandanti* (good-goers) wielded fennel stalks against the sorghum branches of their enemies. As they had been held suspect by the Church, Carlo Ginzburg studied Inquisition trial records in his *Night Battles* (1983).

Threats to success were many. The child might lay dead in the womb and need manual removal, which itself might easily tear delicate tissue and harm the mother. Afterbirth removal could lead to severe hemorrhaging and sepsis. If not aligned in the birth canal properly, the baby could become lodged and require manual rotation or other manipulations, and of course the umbilical cord might become entangled and prevent normal exit. In such emergencies the doctors arrived and the prayers to Saints Leonard and Margaret flew heavenward.

See also: *Arts: Daily Life in Art; Economics and Work: Women in the Labor Force; Family and Gender: Health and Illness; Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing; Pregnancy; Wives and Husbands; Fashion and Appearance: Attire, Female; Bathing and Personal Hygiene; Food and Drink: Galenic Health Regimens; Housing and Community: Barbers and Surgeons; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Physicians; Villages and Village Life; Science and Technology: Anatomy and Dissection*

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Burial. See Death, Funerals, and Burial

CHILDHOOD

In Tuscany, infancy (*infantia*) was reckoned to last from birth to age seven, childhood (*pueritia*) from 7 to 14, and adolescence (*adolescentia*, also called *gioventù* (joh-ven-**too**) or youth) from 15 to 28 or when married. Clearly the labels do not coincide with our twenty-first-century usage, and so the student of the period must adapt to the different social landscape. The Italian word *fanciullo* (fahn-**chool**-loh) as used in the fifteenth century might be translated as child, servant, boy, or assistant; the contemporary word for “boy,” *ragazzo*, had the narrower meaning of boys aged 16 to 20. Tuscan girls ended their childhood when they were married or took their vows as nuns, perhaps as early as age 13; boys marked theirs when their fathers died. Married men who lived with their parents in the family palazzo—or rural hovel—were still considered adolescents.

Younger children in wealthier families might be raised by their parents, but were more likely to be under the care of older siblings or servants, perhaps a nurse or nanny given that specific job. Doctors recommended diets and regimens that maintained physical health, while preachers and religious writers stressed spiritual and moral development. Good parents should raise good children, reassured Dominican friar Giovanni Dominici. Provide pictures of Jesus and saints, and let children pretend to say Mass. The child's will should be disciplined and bent into that of a good Christian, but not broken by abuse.

At age 15 a Tuscan boy might be working on the family farm, helping his father with his trade, apprenticed to a master artisan, serving in a noble household, studying in grammar school, or beginning study at the university in Padua or Bologna; and he was subject to the rural head-tax in the Florentine contado. Girls in their early teens also helped at home: some are known to have been virtually apprenticed to their fathers. On farms they tended crops and animals and smaller children; in cities some attended grammar and arithmetic schools, or girls' schools in nunneries. Prepubescent lower or working-class girls could traverse the streets to run errands, make deliveries, sell garden goods or other items, or tend market stalls if



This *Portrait of a Boy* (dated 1480s to 1500) is variously attributed to Bernardino Pinturicchio (1454–1513) of Perugia and Andrea di Aloigi (aka L'Ingegno; 1480–1521) of Assisi. The sitter is unknown but was once thought to be young Raphael. The artist captures none of the joy or playfulness of youth, turning the subject into an adult without maturity. Tempera on panel. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

jobs as servants or places in nunneries. When old enough, girls seeking marriage needed dowries, which might be accumulated by years of service or charitable donations. From the 1540s girls aged 10 to 12 might find a temporary home in a conservatory, such as Rome's Santa Caterina della Rosa, designed to protect the chastity of daughters of prostitutes and other girls at risk as they entered and experienced puberty. They gained basic literacy and Christian doctrine, and skills such as weaving, sewing, lace-making, or silk thread production. Orphanages were also established to care for children both of whose parents had died or were missing. Orphaned children, however, often had resources such as property and a guardian listed in a will or family who would care for or adopt them.

their parents felt they could be trusted. Once they hit puberty, social norms required girls be kept apart from the public to protect their chastity. Lower-class families often could not afford to isolate them. Some single mothers who were prostitutes began to pimp their own daughters at about this age. Whatever a young woman's class and however she came by it, pregnancy outside of marriage brought both personal and familial dishonor.

As the Renaissance era progressed, both civic and Church authorities established institutions to care for children who were at risk. Children, usually infants, whose mothers were unmarried, slaves, servants, nuns, prostitutes, or had died in childbirth, began to find shelter in foundling homes in the early fifteenth century. Residents tended to die in large numbers at young ages, but survivors went on to tend younger residents. Boys eventually found apprenticeships and girls either

Boys and young men, even those properly apprenticed or otherwise employed, often had the run of the streets. Their disruptive behavior could range from mischief and innocent pranks to criminal theft, assault, and male prostitution. Rival gangs mimicked their rowdier elders, staging street fights with fists, rocks, weapons, and collateral damage. Friars and adult confraternities responded by establishing child confraternities and then those for older boys. These provided adult models to channel youthful energies toward positive civic and religious ends, and added regularity to what was often a chaotic phase of life.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Apprentices; Putting-Out System; Sheep and Wool Economy in the South; *Family and Gender*: Espousal and Wedding; Fostering, Step Children, and Adoption; Health and Illness; Homosexuality and Sodomy; Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing; Pregnancy; Siblings; *Virtù* and Honor; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Children; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Jewish Communities; Poverty and the Poor; Villages and Village Life; Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare*: Crime and Punishments; War and Civilians; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Children's Toys and Games; Church Festivals and Processions; *Religion and Beliefs*: Christian Art in the Home; Confraternities; Nuns and Nunneries

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Conception and Contraception. See Fertility, Conception, and Contraception

DEATH, FUNERALS, AND BURIAL

Death arrived for everyone, but it came in different guises. If one survived to adulthood, he or she would have seen many instances, from a stillborn sibling to the succumbing of an aged grandparent to plague dead in the street. Catholic preachers warned that no one knew when or how one would die, and all one could do was pray and prepare for a good death. The *Art of Dying* laid out the spiritual preparation—sacramental last rites of communion and sincere confession, reconciliation with enemies, fighting off despair and putting on hope—while one’s notary made sure an up-to-date will was in place and the family could survive the member’s passing. Of course, death very often came without warning and time to prepare. If one were at or near home, or wealthy enough to be transported back, then at least the corpse could rejoin the family for a final send-off. When a son went off to university or war, or a husband left on business or into exile, family might never know their fate. A widow who was not sure she was a widow usually had to wait three years before remarrying, just in case her husband, or reliable news of his being alive, came to her.

Dying as a process was one of life’s great mysteries. Theologians declared it occurred when the soul left the body; physicians did not argue and sought signs such as the smell of putrefaction, lack of movement, breathing, and body warmth. But even signs could mislead, and the culture circulated many tales of those who had awakened from false death, sometimes even as the dirt fell upon them. Except in time of plague, a corpse was carefully tended and washed by the deceased’s female relatives or the local midwife. In some places a special civic corps of corpse-bearers dressed and attended the body until it was buried. Deceased confraternity members received special attention from their brothers, who saw to it that the body was dressed in the group’s robe and laid on its own bier. Guilds, too, could play a role in preparing and burying members’ remains. Lay men and women who belonged to third-order affiliations with mendicant orders were entitled to be buried in a robe of the order. However prepared, the corpse was laid out publicly at least overnight for viewing and prayers, while preparations for the funeral and burial were carried out.

Sumptuary laws that regulated feasting and set dress codes for the living could do so for the dead as well. For a while in fifteenth-century Florence, apart from knights and judges, corpses of men and women had to be wrapped in simple all-white wool lined with linen. Men had to wear a simple white cap, while women could not wear a garland or false hair, and a limit was set on what was on her head. Also banned were silk, silver, and gold rings. In 1473 restrictions on dressing corpses were lifted. During serious epidemics, normal practices and customs were suspended. No one wanted contact with dead bodies, the very air around which was supposed to be poisoned. Collected by paid corpse-bearers, they were transported in two-wheeled tumbrels that could be tipped back so bodies could slide out into the pits that served as graves.

If a death occurred under suspicious circumstances, an autopsy might have been required, which would have postponed formalities. Most cities had at least one confraternity whose mission was to find and bury the indigent dead. At least one confraternity in each city accompanied condemned criminals to their executions and buried their corpses. Some corpses of executed criminals wound up on dissection tables as demonstrations for medical students and other onlookers.

At the funeral itself, women were expected to unleash a torrent of emotion, while men held their emotions in stoical reserve. At confraternity funerals the chanting of male voices was supposed to drown out those of wailing women. Women were often banned from funerals during plague time, as in fifteenth-century Bologna. Also banned were excessive mourning clothes, such as expensive black gowns or capes with long trains. Catholic burial was usually in blessed ground, especially in or around a church. Both old superstitions and Church teachings supported the idea, as it was believed this would keep demons away and better present the person at the Last Judgment.

Death Omnipresent

Death surrounded the Renaissance-era Italian, even apart from the visitations of plague. In church one sat surrounded by corpses in floor and walls; one prayed before crucified Christ, prayed for the dead and for one's own good death, and to those who had died and gone to heaven. Churches hosted funerals whose processions wended their ways through city streets. Neighborhood moms and wives died all too frequently in childbirth, and children were crushed beneath cartwheels and hooves. Animals were butchered, mournful bellows or screeches echoing down stone streets. Italians celebrated life so vigorously, perhaps because death was always so close.

To die forgotten and without prayers for one's soul was among the era's greatest fears. Even with last rites the burden of sin anyone carried was enough to condemn the soul to the torments of purgatory. If one could afford it, the strategy was to leave a will with clear instructions for a chapel, memorial, altarpiece, or set of liturgical plate or vestments in one's parish church or one of the great mendicant churches. Marked with the giver's name or coat-of-arms, passersby would be prompted to add a prayer or two to God's account. Even popes worried. Julius II had Old St. Peter's Basilica torn down to be replaced with an enormous reminder to pray for him. The family, too, needed to be reminded of the deceased, of whom a death mask of wax or terra-cotta was sometimes made, from which a bust could be fashioned or a portrait painted. Of course, if one had been obscure and forgotten in life, he or she remained obscure and forgotten in death and after.

See also: Arts: Art Patronage; Portraits; *Economics and Work:* Notaries; *Family and Gender:* Health and Illness; Inheritance; Last Wills and Testaments; Old Age; *Fashion and Appearance:* Sumptuary Laws; *Housing and Community:* Death in the Community; Physicians; Plague; *Religion and Beliefs:* Chapels; Sacraments, Catholic

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DIVORCE, SEPARATION, AND ANNULMENT

Married life could be unexpectedly and intolerably unsatisfactory, a truism for any time period. Neither Roman nor Germanic law, bases for most secular law in Renaissance-era Italy, had any bars to dissolving an existing valid marriage. Roman Catholic canon law, which had authority throughout Italy, however, trumped secular law when it came to defining what constituted marriage, since the Church had long declared marriage a holy sacrament. Until 1563, Church canon

law only required mutual consent and sexual consummation for a valid marriage, leaving lots of room for local customs and laws. When considering validity, the Church often did take into account the persons' legal ability to marry, as defined locally or by the Church itself. For example, priests and friars could not marry, nor could already-married persons, nor brothers and sisters, and infants could not give personal consent.

Civil laws touching marriage were generally in line with Church teachings. Governments did, however, impose various restrictive civil laws: against abduction or bigamy; minimum number of wedding witnesses needed; maximum dowry amounts; minimum degrees of relational separation of the couple (no parent and child, siblings, first cousins, etc.); and the ages below which a child needed parental consent (ranging from 15 in Vercelli to 25 in Perugia and Piacenza). Violations of civil laws triggered fines, prison terms, or corporal punishment; but they did not affect the validity of a marriage. Importantly, the bond created in a valid wedding—legal ability to wed, consent, consummation—could not be dissolved until death. In short, divorce was not allowed by either Church or state. The Church, however, did hold out two options to the dissatisfied couple: separation and annulment.

Separation could be temporary or permanent, voluntary and private, or officially imposed. Authorities became involved when either one party requested an intervention or the couple's situation became public and scandalous. In any case separation—sometimes confusingly referred to as *divortio*—meant that the marriage remained intact, and that neither party could validly marry another person. If both parties chose to join a religious order, the Church would grant a formal voluntary separation. A couple might choose to divide up their goods and liabilities in a formal notarial agreement and simply go their own ways. A voluntary separation could mean little more than a wife rejoining her birth family for some time, perhaps as a cooling-off period. If this was prolonged with no clear end, the husband could sue for *adhere*, which would compel the wife to return to their home. Either the wife would return or she would provide a court her reasons for not returning. If she desired to remain apart, she would counter-sue for *separatio*.

A study of sixteenth-century legal cases in Verona reveals that 83% of *adhere* cases were brought by husbands who wanted their absent wives back home. Conversely, 77% of *separatio* suits were filed by wives seeking permanent distance from their husbands. Grounds for a wife's leaving her husband included violence against her, his failure to support her, and his committing adultery or heresy. Usually a man's suit for separation was based on her adultery. Court records lay out patterns of male maltreatment: physical abuse or her fear of severe forms of it, cruel verbal insults and taunting loud enough to be heard by neighbors, verbal or other attacks on her honor, his bragging of adulterous sex with prostitutes, his

misuse of her dowry and possessions, even his pimping of his wife and forcing her to commit adultery. A common theme was his inability to control himself, acting more animal than human. In declining a woman's suit, a court could require the husband to post surety, a monetary pledge against committing future violence. A Venetian study has over half of women's suits succeeding. This was especially important because the abusive husband had to return what he could of his wife's dowry. With this, she could move to another town or city and start fresh, though she could not marry again. If the dowry was long gone or tied up in litigation, and she had no local family or funds, she might find shelter in one of the era's hospitals or sixteenth-century asylums for "badly married" women, which supported women and, if needed, their young children.

When a bishop's court granted an annulment, it recognized that no valid marriage had existed in the first place. Evidence of this might be brought to the authority's attention, or suits for annulment brought, usually by wives. Church courts needed real convincing that the marriage was a sham. For example, if a woman had unknowingly married a priest, she could seek an annulment. Grounds for annulment included one partner's inability to have procreative sex despite three years of sincere effort. This meant male dysfunction or severe tightness affecting a woman's vagina. Consummation meant that the sex act had occurred, not that it had resulted in pregnancy. Infertility or sterility was another matter and not grounds. Court cases involved testimony by priests, midwives, physicians, kin, neighbors, servants, and coworkers; unsuccessful remedies mentioned included prayer, Masses, magic, witchcraft, herbs, cubeb, large-winged ants, quail testicles, and sugar. An annulment based on faulty male performance was a blow against his honor, and he had to return the dowry. But she had court proof that she was still a virgin and was still eligible for marriage to another.

Another basis for annulment was coercion, usually by the father on his daughter to marry his choice. Evidence here was less objective, but courts considered a wide range of statements, behaviors, and observations on her part and that of witnesses. Her age and her father's personality were especially important. If she was very young and he a very forceful figure, then coercion was easy to picture. Threats and even violence were not enough, since willful and perverse daughters were far from unknown and the era accepted force as discipline. If, however, she was shown by witnesses to have opposed the union consistently, openly, and vehemently, then she might prevail. After Trent (1563), other grounds appeared for annulling a marriage: the presiding priest was not competent or no banns had announced the wedding beforehand.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Notaries; *Family and Gender:* Dowries; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Inheritance; *Virtù* and Honor;

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DOWRIES

A bride's dowry was a sum of money or money and property paid by the father or guardian of the woman to her husband-to-be. The sum was a matter of negotiation, and was considered the woman's share of her father's estate. After its provision, the daughter had no further claims to family wealth or property, which would remain in the control of the family's males. A dowry's purpose was to provide the couple ready cash with which to begin their family life together, and to return to the woman if and when widowed, usually in place of a share in her husband's estate. Women who entered a nunnery usually provided a "spiritual dowry" to provide for the new nuns' physical needs. These tended to be a fraction of a bride's dowry, and differed with the prestige of the female community. Both brides and novices also brought trousseaux of personal property to their new homes: for the wealthy gowns, expensive cloth, dinnerware, small paintings, or jewelry, and expensively decorated chests in which to keep their treasures.

The values of dowries tended to rise markedly over the Renaissance era, reflecting monetary inflation, a social interest in increased childbearing in the midst of plague, and changes in the "marriage market." In Venice, for example, an average noble dowry in the 1380s was worth about 1,000 ducats. In 1420 the state set the maximum at 1,600 ducats, unless the wife was a plebeian, in which case it was 2,000 ducats, to compensate men for marrying outside their class. The

maximum was reset in 1505 to 3,000, in 1535 to 4,000, and in 1551 to 5,000 ducats, all of which maxima were often violated by anxious fathers. Between 1394 and 1496 Venice's Arborsani family spent 36,600 ducats on dowries, an average of over 2,815 per wedding, and the fifteenth-century Quartari family an average of 3,125 for eight daughters. Florence's patricians averaged 1,010 florins per wedding around 1450, but a Medici daughter came with 2,000 florins plus a 500-florin trousseau in 1466. Italy's nobility paid no attention to cost: in 1387 Valentina Visconti of Milan had a dowry of 450,000 florins, and Milan's Anna Sforza was accompanied by 150,000 ducats in 1491. At such rates even well-off families could ill afford more than one or two dowries, so high-status daughters increasingly found themselves being pledged to nunneries even as children. Conversely, with fewer marriageable women of their own class, noble or patrician sons either postponed or foreswore marriage or sought women among the lower classes. In Venice, this last option resulted in one's being stricken from the official list of nobles.

Of course, the middle and working classes could hardly provide even respectable sums to marry off their daughters. One answer was charity: the rich merchant of Prato, Francesco Datini, was asked by friends many times to contribute to a worthy but poor girl's fund. He had married Margherita Bandini whose exiled family had provided her with no dowry, a fact of which he reminded her on several occasions. After the Black Death many wills included dowries or partial dowries for specific family members or neighbors or for orphaned or abandoned girls housed in an institution awaiting marriage. Florence's government set up a dowry fund, the *Monte delle dote*, which ran from 1425 through the late 1570s. Fathers began investing money when the daughter was born and, assuming she lived to marry, her husband received the accumulated sum upon espousal. Over its life some 30,000 girls participated. Of the 19,000 enrolled to 1499 only 3.6% became nuns; of those enrolled after 1530, 28.2% entered a nunnery. Some, of course, died during enrollment, causing the father to lose his investment. Lower-class fathers could also provide a dowry by mortgaging property or borrowing the sum. In the later fifteenth century, poorer Sienese families provided dowries worth about 30 florins at a time when their social betters were paying out 800.

Rules differed across Italy as to how dowries were to be used during marriage. In general the husband invested it for the family's purposes, including in business or land. In Venice the custom was that the husband only controlled one-third its value, while the wife theoretically managed the other two-thirds on the family's behalf. As these values rose, however, local governments shifted more control to husbands, while wives were protected by enhancing the trousseaux over which only she had control. Of course, a husband could be bankrupted by economic forces, bad investments, or exile, leaving his widow with no resources of her own. If she died before her husband, he absorbed the dowry into the family's patrimony.

At her husband's death her family's wealth, minus the original value of her dowry, was reserved to her sons and unmarried daughters. His will might provide a house and income to support her as long as she remained a chaste widow, or she might have to depend on her sons for room and board. If so, her dowry might be retained, to be passed on through her will. Sometimes bequests helped augment granddaughters' or even daughters' dowries. Many widows entered religious houses, donating part of their dowry for their support; the remainder would revert to her birth family. Others set up annuities for life to support them living independently in spinsterhood, with the remainder bequeathed to religious or even artistic purposes. If the widow was young enough and chose to remarry, she would carry her dowry, perhaps fattened with additional family funds, into a second marriage.

See also: *Arts:* Women and the Arts; *Economics and Work:* Credit and Loans; Notaries; *Family and Gender:* Espousal and Wedding; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Inheritance; Last Wills and Testaments; Old Age; Widows; Wives and Husbands; *Fashion and Appearance:* Attire, Female; Sump-tuary Laws; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Weddings

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EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

Whether popes or peasants, Italians valued education and the skills it imparted. The ability to make simple calculations and read a poster or basic contract or sign one's name was necessary, at least for men, in the commercial world that northern and central Italy was becoming. In sophisticated Venice in 1450 about 40% of adult males were literate, somewhat more in 1500, and somewhat less (34%) by 1600. For most, the process of learning began in mid-childhood.

Some children learned at home from a literate and numerate parent, older sibling, or willing neighbor. Well-off parents brought tutors into their homes, and institutionalized children had teachers provided by the administering charity. In many occupations masters taught their apprentices and servants, though many of these boys had had prior education at home or in school. Young girls entering nunneries were at least taught to read to participate in the group's prayer and liturgical life. Apart from families or home tutors, there were few other educational opportunities for girls, as most schools were strictly male.

Renaissance-era schools were single-teacher and of three types. Least utilized were Church-sponsored schools, whether in monasteries or parishes, at least until the later sixteenth century. City governments founded and supported communal schools, especially in smaller communities. The norm was education by independent teachers who ran their own classrooms and charged tuition. Sometimes parents established a school and hired its teacher, as in Bergamo in 1543, when 16 parents founded an "academy" that taught 20 students. Elementary literacy education began with the alphabet and syllables and then branched into either Latin or vernacular Italian. *Abbaco* was the study of simple computation—multiplying, dividing, fractions, and business applications including interest computation. Teachers, and therefore schools, specialized. In Venice in 1587 eight Church schools taught 322 pupils; five communal teachers had 188 students; 160 independent Latin teachers 1,650; and 72 independent teachers of Italian or *abbaco* 2,465. All told, 245 teachers taught 4,625 students in formal classrooms. Latin teachers were often clerics who taught in their own homes or rented rooms, averaging 23 students of varying levels at a time. Italian or *abbaco* teachers tended to be laymen whose classrooms held twice as many, one seating 120. In the 1390s even tiny Borgo San Sepolcro had several *abbaco* teachers and around 100 pupils ages 6 to 15. Teachers often had a *ripetitore*, an assistant who drilled and corrected students orally. Parents expected firm but fair levels of discipline, and educational commentators agreed that brutality had no place.

Three Renaissance-era trends made deep impacts on elementary education. The advance of humanism, with its emphasis on Classical authors, led Latin teachers to replace most standard medieval texts, except the basic grammar known as *Donatus*, with Latin originals. Between about 1380 and 1450 humanist educators shifted typical curricula to an emphasis on poetry (Vergil, Horace, Ovid, Terence), history (Caesar, Cicero, and Sallust), and moral philosophy (drawn from all of these). Printing meant much cheaper editions of basic texts, many of which were made more interesting by including illustrative pictures. Finally, the Catholic Reformation movement stressed lay literacy and higher standards for education of clergy. Seminaries appeared and seminarians often taught local students; in Milan they were required to do so. Schools of Christian Doctrine began in fifteenth-century Bologna teaching literacy and Catholic fundamentals, but exploded in the sixteenth

century. They were sponsored by clergy or confraternities and held classes for two hours only on Sunday and holiday afternoons—about 85 days per year. Boys went to one church, girls to another. In Christian Doctrine schools' first decade (1530s–1540s), Milan's archdiocese established 200 serving 2,000 students. By 1584 it claimed 740 schools with 40,000 students. In 1599, the city alone claimed 20,504 studying in all types of school.

Jewish Italian families valued education at least as much as Christian families. Every Jewish male was expected to begin reading scripture in Hebrew (alongside an Italian translation) by age five, and many families began earlier. Because of the small sizes of communities, teaching was far more intimate, and study outside class setting expected. Wealthy families took in tutors, and the less well-off sent their sons to local or distant schools; or the local rabbi filled in. By tradition, communities were expected to support poverty-stricken students financially. Significantly, students learned writing by composing letters daily to all manner of people, thus combining grammar and rhetoric.

See also: *Arts*: Painters and Their Workshops; *Economics and Work*: Apprentices; Book Printing and Sales; Putting-Out System; *Family and Gender*: Childhood; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Servants, Household; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Jewish Communities; Patronage; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Children's Toys and Games; Reading; *Religion and Beliefs*: Confraternities; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Monks and Monasteries; Nuns and Nunneries; *Science and Technology*: Universities

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ESPOUSAL AND WEDDING

Decisions about marriage were probably the most vital ones that members of a family made. Marriage created family alliances, promised members of new generation, brought a new personality into the groom's household, saw the dispersal of a significant portion of the bride's family wealth, and, as a Catholic sacrament, was meant to be permanent.



This wedding portrait of the well-off Marsilio Cassotti and Faustina Assonica of Venice was painted by Lorenzo Lotto (1480–1556) in 1523. It commemorates the ring ceremony and features cupid, a wooden yoke that binds the couple symbolically, and the laurel of chastity and faithfulness. Oil on canvas. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

Boys and girls of a certain age, and men and marriageable women were not to experience one another's company without careful safeguards. This was certainly the ideal among the urban upper classes, and was probably customary among laboring classes. No father of any class wanted his daughter to lose her honor or her virginity before marriage. Men seeking brides knew of marriageable women by reputation, on sight at church, or through social circles. When time came to marry, some families relied on professional marriage brokers who arranged meetings; one of the most famous informal brokers was Lorenzo de' Medici. Rulers and patrons such as Il Magnifico had wide circles of acquaintances and friends, and could be trusted to have the best interests of both parties in mind. Fathers of grooms-to-be played significant roles in directing their sons' gaze toward appropriate women, as did mothers, such as Florentine widow Alessandra Strozzi.

Contemporary advice books provided both serious and satirical views on choosing a wife and on women in general. Some were outright misogynistic. The more even-handed stressed the girl's or woman's moral qualities and lack of bad habits—such as throwing fits or spending lavishly. Cleric Sabba da Castiglione published a manual in the 1550s that saw three editions and 19 printings to 1597. He stated that she should be modest in food, drink, dress, speech, and what she looked at and listened to; she should avoid disreputable people; and she should be dedicated to whatever task is at hand. Fathers of potential brides were urged to choose grooms for their daughters who were sober, mature, of good repute, and likely to be faithful. It was not enough that he be noble or wealthy: one should not sell one's daughter. Others stressed that partners should be from the same class and social status, not be too distant in age, and both welcome children.

Girls of virtually any age could be promised or even married to a suitor (though not consummated until after menarche). Civil laws defined the age beneath which a girl had to have parental consent to marry: it varied from 15 to 25. The Church forbade marriages forced on girls, a situation that could prove grounds for an annulment. Because brides-to-be of all classes were expected to bring with them a dowry, however, cooperation of her family was vital. A girl could turn down a father-approved suitor, but she knew the alternative to marriage was the nunnery. Aristotle had said that 18 was the best age for a woman to marry, and 37 for a man; Plato had pegged the male at 25. In Italy a man could usually marry without parental consent at 18, though no commentators thought that old enough: he should be mature and have resources. Florence's 1427 tax census reveals that on average women married at 18 and men at about 30. Virtually all Florentine men eventually married. In Venice, by contrast, studies show that among the upper classes only 50% to 60% did. This was in large part to keep family wealth concentrated in the married brothers' hands.

Wedding after Trent

With only stated intent and consummation required for marriage, some couples followed their own instead of families' wills, resulting in elopement and clandestine but valid marriages. In the 1563 decree *Tametsi*, Church leaders at Trent refused to require parental consent, as the French and Spanish desired, but they clearly altered wedding rituals. Announcements (banns) of upcoming weddings had to be made on three Sundays from her parish church; her parish priest had to officiate, with three witnesses; and weddings had to be registered to be valid. Participants' free will and consummation remained requirements, but no longer sufficed.

Before the Council of Trent, the only requirement for a valid wedding ritual was a formal exchange of statements of intent by the couple, usually before a notary and witnesses, followed by sexual consummation. Catholic teaching treated the sacrament as one performed by the partners, and even a priest's blessing was customary but not necessary. Among the lower classes, the time between agreement to marry and the ritual exchange could be a day or two. Among elites, for whom much was bound up with the dowry—negotiations, agreement, delivery—it could be months. According to his *ricordanza*, on March 31 Goro Dati signed a betrothal contract to marry Betta. On Easter Monday, April 7, he formally presented her with a ring. On Sunday, June 22, her cousins agreed to supply a dowry of 900 florins, the couple exchanged intentions before a notary and witnesses and they were married, and the marriage was consummated; on June 26, 800 florins were paid to Goro. Other cases reveal other details: the groom and bride's father create a contract before witnesses and notary, followed by a feast and dancing at the bride's father's house, where bride and groom may meet for the first time; later in the month the groom presents a casket of jewels to his wife at her home; 11 months later the dowry is delivered, husband presents the ring, intentions are exchanged, a feast ensues, and she moves to her new home where there is more feasting and consummation of the marriage.

See also: *Arts*: Portraits; *Family and Gender*: Dowries; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; *Virtù* and Honor; Wives and Husbands; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Furnishing the House; Jewish Communities; Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare*: Alliances and Treaties; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Civic Festivals; Weddings; *Religion and Beliefs*: Sacraments, Catholic

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FAMILIES, LABORING CLASS

Roughly 95% of Venetians belonged to the Citizen and Popular classes, while only 5% were listed as noble or patrician. This was probably a fairly typical spread between the elites—whether in terms of wealth, name, or political power—and the remainder of society at any time in any given city. Rural elites were likely to have been even a smaller percentage of the rural population. The lower classes, though here labeled “laboring,” included those who had few, if any, possessions and lived off charity. Indigence or destitution was usually the mark of the individual who lost the family ties that kept even poverty a controllable reality. For these classes, family had some of the same meanings that it did for the elites, but one could argue it was anchored in daily experience rather than symbolism or tradition.

For one thing, non-elites often lacked family names, and were simply denoted as “John the shoemaker,” “Simon from Pisa,” or “Jane the wife of Simon from Pisa,” in Italian of course. A shoemaker was not likely to have had distinguished ancestors, and an immigrant may have severed all ties with family back home. A shoemaker’s father may have been a construction worker who had apprenticed his son and died early. In turn, the shoemaker’s son Francesco may become a notary, using the title and the rather generic name Ser Francesco di Giovanni. His son Roberto might have the name Roberto di Francesco. The point is that there were no working class equivalents of the Venetian Contarini, Roman Colonna, or Florentine Alberti.

For another, few non-elites had a family seat such as a palazzo or castello. Families tended to be two-generation structures of parents and children with only the occasional non-nuclear family members living in the same residence. Rural families probably had more flexibility here, since the nature of agricultural labor meant that all but the utterly incapable could help with family labor, chores, or child-rearing. In cities, widowed parents might join a son’s household, some even handing over what patrimony or widow’s dowry there was to his control in return for food and shelter. Many non-elites rented their residences, but a study has shown that in later sixteenth-century Venice only about half owned them. Even so, these would have been rather humble abodes, often attached to or containing the family’s shops or workshops. Many more lived in rented tenements or apartments into which larger structures had been subdivided.

Famiglie, of course, were enlarged by the addition of orphaned kin, apprentices, servants, widowed sisters, parents, and others, and family members were swept away by plague, accidents, death in childbirth, murders, and other tragedies. Couples separated, sons went off to war or apprenticeships, daughters found work as servants or got married, and wet-nursed children rejoined their birth families. Some newcomers brought incomes with them, as producers in the putting-out system, wet nurses, day laborers, needleworkers, or other skilled artisans. Many nuclear families, especially in the countryside, had multiple incomes, often seasonal in nature. Here a father might work the land, or serve as a carter and a mason. His wife also worked in the fields, but also in her garden growing produce for the local market. She might also work with her daughter at home in the early stages of silk or wool production. Younger boys might tend a wealthy landowner’s flock and, when older, work as day laborers.

At some point both young men and women probably married, with dowry and festivities on a far reduced scale from those of their social betters. Since most non-elites by definition did not have the political or economic networks that elite marriages were arranged to enhance, or considerations of blood or family name, their nuptials probably joined people who were drawn to one another. Brides were probably from local families, neighbors, perhaps, or daughters of guild brothers or

other business associates. The neighborhoods and villages that served as backdrops to elite family life were the very matrices of the working classes. Even if a family had moved in from another town or the *contado*, the tendency was for its members to remain, at least in the first generation. If the men worked across town, the women shopped and gossiped locally, worshipped in the parish church, broke up fights, and drove out prostitutes. Men usually worked near home, joined the local confraternity, competed athletically with local men, and drank at the neighborhood tavern. When a family moved, it was usually within the old area.

Neighborhood was also the theater of individual and familial honor. Family members shaped their reputations by their actions and attitudes, which were generally on display locally. Except to sleep, it might be said that non-elite Italians lived in the streets and alleys, where late afternoon air was fresher and the light better than inside. This meant that the alcoholic wife, the tantrum-prone daughter, or violent husband publicly displayed their weaknesses and earned the disdain—or conversely respect when merited—of their neighbors.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Putting-Out System; *Family and Gender:* Childhood; Dowries; Inheritance; Names, Personal and Family; Siblings; *Virtù* and Honor; Wives and Husbands; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and *Piazze*; Furnishing the House; Villages and Village Life; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Weddings

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FAMILIES, NOBLE AND PATRICIAN

Today their portraits look out from museum walls. It takes a conscious act of imagination to place oneself in the villa or palazzo or *castello* of the couple pictured.



Young Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici, aged about ten, appears as the Magus/King Kaspar from the biblical Nativity story. Benozzo Gozzoli (1420–1497) frescoed the Chapel of the Palazzo Medici in Florence between 1459 and 1461, inserting many portraits of the family and its courtiers. (Library of Congress)

The painting itself may have celebrated a milestone in the family they led, a finished construction project or a business expansion. For the elite classes the palazzo—in Italian *casa* was the root of both house and lineage (*casata*)—was the symbolic center of the familial universe, and tokens such as the portrait, heraldic symbols, and an ancestor's arms and armor on display personalized the space.

Yet even in so class and family-conscious a society as that of Venice, in 1582 half of the city's 1,230 patrician families lived in rented accommodations. This was the same percentage as the rest of society. Some were palazzi rented from other nobles who had fallen on hard times or whose families had shrunk drastically. In Venice nobles were patricians; elsewhere patricians were wealthy and politically powerful non-nobles. In any

case, the idea that the *casa* sat at the center of the *famiglia* often proved mythical. More than in any other state noble or patrician status was the property of a set few. In 1297, the Serrata, or Closing, listed all families whose members were noble, and about 30 more were added after the War of Chioggia (1380s). Noble families were equal among themselves and constituted about 4.5% of Venice's population. Their men held the highest offices and seats in the Senate, and they alone wore ceremonial cloaks of crimson velvet lined with lynx fur. Though often international merchants, they were never to have worked with their hands for a living. Yet nobility was not an economic status, for there were poor nobles who never lost their status and political positions, and had to rent out their palazzi.

With or without an ancestral palazzo—or armor—the elite Italian family consisted of a male head and his nuclear family, and all blood relations that had some dependence on him. The dominant side of the family was the male line, including

sons and grandsons, brothers, uncles, cousins, and nephews. A father who had grown too old or weak to be effective remained cared for and respected if not active. Of these relations, that of the head of the household and son, especially eldest son, was the most important. Some combination of wealth or profession, control of land, family name, tradition of office holding, length of residence, and reputation for honor defined urban elites. In Naples and Rome the tendencies were feudal, with ancestry, blood, and land at the forefront, while commercial Florence disenfranchised its old nobility in favor of a commercial and financial oligarchy of office holders. Conversely, Neapolitan nobles could not act as merchants. In Milan a wealthy family could buy land with vassals attached and claim the title of count or marquis. Under its dukes, such a title was needed to hold important offices, direct access to which could not be purchased. In fifteenth-century Udine, only members of 111 “noble” families in a population of about 14,000 could serve on the city’s Council. These included families who had previously held office, feudal vassals, and professionals such as physicians and lawyers. In all of these cases the status carried down the male lines, as women acquired the status of the men they married.

Ricordanze

An important source for social life is this family record-book. Heads of families recorded, for their own family’s use, births, deaths, marriages, major acquisitions, and other events. But these diary-like books also contain reminiscences for future generations, advice for success in life, religious meditations, and remarks on the politics of the day. Some of the more useful ones for historians contain virtual chronologies of major and purely local events, such as plague, civic unrest, or war. Others outline household expenditures and resources. Unlike business accounts, these are neither comprehensive nor systematic, but they are fascinating.

By their wealth and political power, elite families were different from those beneath them. In a responsible society they had what the French called *noblesse oblige*, or the nobility’s obligation to act on behalf of society as a whole. Their lives were risked on battlefields, their wealth went to support the Church and civic projects, and their time went to serve the public in offices and on decision-making councils. They married among themselves, brought a sense of magnificence to their city, and set an example for lesser folk. In reality, their status often led to arrogance, corruption, and even violence. Family members fought with and even killed one another over matters from slights to honor to rights to inheritance. By the later sixteenth century many jurisdictions allowed elite males to carry swords

and daggers ostentatiously, as if to intimidate the denizens of the streets whose names recall their noble ancestors. *Virtù*, or excellence and effectiveness, often clashed with honor, which required prudence and good judgment, something many in society believed the elites naturally lacked. This was truer, perhaps, of rural aristocrats than of mercantile patricians in Florence or Venice. In Sicily and Naples feudal families literally lorded over their vassals and peasants, even combining to oppose and fight the royal government. Here castles remained intact and occupied and defended. Not every noble family had a palazzo.

See also: *Arts*: Portraits; *Family and Gender*: Childhood; Dowries; Inheritance; Names, Personal and Family; Siblings; *Virtù* and Honor; Wives and Husbands; *Fashion and Appearance*: Social Status and Clothing; *Housing and Community*: Furnishing the House; Palazzi; Violence within the Household and Community; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Weddings; *Primary Document*: A Future Pope's Letter to His Father on His Own Paternity: Letter of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini to Silvio Piccolomini (1443)

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FERTILITY, CONCEPTION, AND CONTRACEPTION

When it came to sex, everyone had advice: relatives, friends, physicians, preachers, midwives, apothecaries, witches, herbalists, astrologers, one's barber, and

traveling charlatans. For the literate there were medical textbooks, popular medical advice books, household advice books, pornography, and Books of Secrets. One early list included 116 fertility enhancers, aphrodisiacs, and contraceptives. Both interfering with conception and trying to remove the effects of a successful conception (abortion), however, were considered serious sins by the Church.

Human procreation required the active participation of both man and woman. Although authoritative Classical Roman physician Galen taught that both contributed “seed” (semen) during sex, the popular notion was Aristotle’s: that only males did. The male was the active force and female passive recipient, a biological belief embedded in laws, culture, religion, and marital relationships. Yet the sex act brought physical pleasure and women admittedly had—often strong—sexual appetites. These were only “normally” and properly satisfied in the marital bed, however; other female responses, such as those of prostitutes, nuns, fornicators, adulteresses, lesbians, or self-pleasurers, were “abnormal” even when licit. As the Church taught, sexual intercourse was only for procreation. Some male physicians even suggested clitorectomies, since the clitoris was understood to be the seat of female sexual drive and pleasure, whose swelling during sex could interfere with conception.

A woman could draw a man to her for sex by placing her menstrual blood or pubic hair in his food, by creating and praying over a waxen image of him, and by casting spells on certain types of leaves late at night. Cities such as Lucca, however, had the death penalty for inciting sexual attraction, and governments from Sicily to Savoy executed sorcerers.

Some couples needed sexual stimulation or aid with female fertility. Female infertility was attributable to inappropriate age or weight, poor Galenic regimen of food and exercise, uneven temperament, problematic menstrual cycles, the evil eye, and even too strong a sex drive. Edible aphrodisiacs included “ant oil,” oysters and shrimp, “cicada oil,” pearl shavings, “Venus balm;” cocoa butter, maca root, catuaba, sarsaparilla, cat’s claw, possum tail, other New World substances; pistachios, pine-nuts, rocket, chick peas, coconuts, skink flesh, and sparrow brains; for males extract of *satyrion erythronium* (powder of an orchid bulb that looks like testicles) mixed with wine, a frog from Hormuz, or Spanish fly (cantharis); foods that look like genitalia (long beans, carrots, eggplant); animal penises or testicles (especially bull, cock, wolf, or donkey); or meat of supposedly oversexed animals: pigeons, pigs, cocks. Apothecaries, charlatans, midwives, and others provided proprietary blends, such as Arab *diasitirion*: satyrion, chick peas, ginger, cinnamon, and sparrow brains (variants included musk, aniseed, parsnip, or rocket seeds). Ineffectiveness was attributed to factors such as inappropriate dosages, herbs being picked at wrong time, or stock too old and stale or that had not aged enough. For the alchemically leaning, practitioners recommended blends of materials such as gold,

silver, mercury, pearls, coral, and emeralds. Curses, spells, and the evil eye could also interfere with one's sex drive, and prophylactics against such magic included charms, talismans, amulets, pins, plaques, and counter-spells.

Timing of conception was vital, especially for begetting males. Sex during menstruation produced monstrosities, lepers, or epileptics, or caused semen to be washed away. Semen needed to mix with menstrual blood for conception, people believed, but the build-up of blood before the woman's period made it too plentiful and the uterus too humid, resulting in conception of a girl. Right after her period, the woman's "seedbed" was just the right humidity for conception of a boy. Timing might also mean astrological time: when the planets were most propitious. It also meant time of day, since in the morning a woman was "drier" and a man's semen warmer and a boy more likely. The sex of a baby could also be influenced by the placement of semen in the uterus (the "warmer" right side for a boy) as aided by the sexual positions assumed ("missionary" was always preferred by doctors and moralists), and by the presence in the bedroom of images of little boys or heroic men that might imprint on the mother. But heroic could not be scary, since beauty imprinted and created a beautiful baby and adult, and vice versa. The introduction of musky, male scents—aloe wood, civet, ambergris—into the room could also have an impact. Of course, prayer was always an option.

Avoiding or ending pregnancy was necessary for prostitutes, adulteresses, fornicators, widows, and sinful nuns. Both, however, were serious sins, and Church and state considered abortion murder. By listing activities or medicinals "to avoid" while trying to conceive, medical advisors back-handedly provided a list of potential contraceptives or abortifacients. Mechanical means of avoiding conception while having sex included coitus interruptus (probably the most popular), oral and anal intercourse (sinful and usually illegal), female sex toys, a sponge, the rhythm method, manual masturbation (sinful at best), and adopting sexual positions that enabled semen to drain out. Post-coital treatments included a range of abortifacient drugs and herbs, amulets, douches, suppositories, and uterine fumigants, as well as directions to reinduce menstruation: dance about right after sex, ride a horse or a jolting cart, sneeze violently, or even undergo a lower-abdominal beating. The idea was to detach the seed—or later fetus—from the uterine wall. Natural contraceptives included aloe, gentian root, peppermint, chamomile, linden blossom, wormwood, colt's foot, pennyroyal, castoreum, scammony, blackberry, birthwort, pepper, sage, rosemary, and thyme; rue, ergot, and savin were popular abortifacients.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; *Family and Gender:* Birth and Midwives; Health and Illness; Homosexuality and Sodomy; Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing; Pregnancy; Wives and Husbands; *Food and Drink:* Drugs; Galenic

Health Regimens; *Housing and Community*: Physicians; *Politics and Warfare*: Crime and Punishments; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; *Religion and Beliefs*: Magic; Nuns and Nunneries; Witches and Sorcerers; *Science and Technology*: Anatomy and Dissection; Pharmacopeias and *Materia Medica*

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FOSTERING, STEP CHILDREN, AND ADOPTION

All siblings were not created equal. Though they did not have a concept of genetics in the modern sense, Renaissance-era Italians did have a concept of blood. And blood mattered. Legitimate offspring of a husband and wife had pride of place for any purposes. Those who entered that circle through adoption, marriage, or fostering were not full siblings, whatever their new father’s love or concern for them, and whatever the laws said. And one did enter the father’s family. Father made the rules—within the bounds of statutory law—and he made the decisions for the family.

Fostering was a form of community service and Christian charity. In fact, in Treviso papal indulgences were available for providing five years’ support. Fostering was an arrangement by which a child was formally taken in by a family until she left to get married or enter a convent, or he was taken in as an apprentice or otherwise struck out on his own. The child in question might have been orphaned,

left as a foundling, or abandoned later in life by his or her mother or father. The child's parents might have been relatives, neighbors, friends, or business associates. A childless family might "rescue" a child left at a monastery or church door by anonymous parents. In any case, fosterage was a legal status, and the new family had obligations to the child, however old. These differed among jurisdictions but typically were provision of food, clothing, shelter, health care and hygiene, some level of education appropriate to the class of the family, and church attendance. In some places, the parish priest had to attest to this last. Very often foster children received these considerations in return for service in the household or on the farm. Sometimes boys simply apprenticed with their foster fathers and followed the path of any apprentice. Girls were to be raised to become wives and mothers, and the training began young. If older girls and young women were not blood relations, they were susceptible to inappropriate attention from and molestation by any male household residents, including sons, visitors, servants, and even the household head. Such activity was at best immoral fornication and at worst felonious rape. Embarrassing pregnancies were terminated or babies left anonymously at foundling homes. Even in the case of rape, the father could be forced to marry the mother and acknowledge the child as his own, allowing her to exchange her foster home for his.

If the pregnant woman was not kin, and the head of the household was the father, he could choose to acknowledge and adopt the child as his own. A person could be adopted at any age. Over a two-year period a Trevisan notary recorded 25 adoptions of children from 14 months of age to 18 years. Adults without natural heirs sometimes adopted adult servants or even slaves and made them their heirs. Such adoptions could take place through wills, and even priests could adopt in this manner. Here the point would be that a person without other strong or recognized familial ties not only received the estate, but also the familial identity and name of the testator. Adoption, unlike fosterage, made the adoptee a legally recognized member of the family. Though this was less important for girl children than for boys, who carried on the adoptive family name, a study in Treviso showed that males adopted from its hospital/foundling home did not significantly outnumber females. One of the stipulations for adopting here was that the family provide a dowry of £100 to £200, a not inconsiderable amount.

The adopting father usually signed a contract with parents who relinquished their rights to their child or with the facility with whom the child had been left. The terms were similar to those for fostering, with adopted girls being provided some level of dowry. Unlike fostering, adoption meant that the newcomer shared the family name, traditions, and honor. Such a youth would probably not be made to join the rank of servants. Adopting one's love child kept him or her from the stigma of illegitimacy, meaning, for example, that a boy could enter the clergy without

special favors. It also meant that the boy became a legitimate heir to the patrimony, obviously something the father desired. If there were other sons by blood, adoption would be a very real cause for resentment.

Stepchildren, of course, came with blended families. These were probably rarer than foster or adopted children. The main reason was that the children of single mothers would usually be brought into the home of the father or into his birth home. Even in the case of an annulment, which made the children technically illegitimate and in need of adopting, fathers were more likely to choose adoption rather than abandonment. Widows often wrestled with their in-laws: they might have had her dowry but she had their heirs. In Tuscany, nubile female stepchildren were rare, it has been posited, because of the threats to their chastity, even from their stepfathers. And as for stepmothers, they were stock villains across the culture.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Apprentices; *Family and Gender*: Childhood; Dowries; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Inheritance; Servants, Household; Siblings; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Neighborhood and Parish; Palazzi; Villages and Village Life

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Funerals. See Death, Funerals, and Burial

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

Daily life presented plenty of threats to people's health. Being born and giving birth were dicey points; plague killed, war killed, and making love could bring painful disease; accidents, animal bites and kicks, human assaults, floods, and shipwrecks maimed and brought death. The person who fought or traveled for a living or simply brought a load by horse cart to the next town was a fool if he did not say a prayer

to St. Christopher to protect him. Famines lowered nutritional intake and invited opportunistic disease. At home, one's own family carried diseases, got drunk and became violent, accidentally served spoiled or tainted food, or injured youngsters with well-meaning horseplay. Teeth were dislodged, bones broken, eyes poked, shoulders dislocated, and ankles sprained. The key to health was not simply following the venerable dietary and lifestyle advice of medical practitioners, but it may have included staying quietly in bed.

Good health meant eating well, sleeping well, keeping clean (including purging), and exercising. It also meant avoiding many things: curses, plague, a mule's hind legs, bad air, diseased sex partners, wild animals, over-exertion, and traveling alone. Good luck; common sense; and resources enough to eat and dress well, escape epidemics, and pursue relatively safe occupations kept most people relatively healthy most of the time. By modern standards, people tended to consume too little lean protein and were deficient in many vitamins. They ate far too many carbohydrates in omnipresent bread and other grain-based foods. This was especially true of the lower classes, whereas wealthier folk had access to larger varieties and steadier supplies of food.

When people fell ill, they also had a variety of options that were dependent on their wealth, preference, and where they lived. Elites in cities could choose among university-trained physicians for relief from internal complaints, and among trained and certified surgeons for skeletal or surface issues such as wounds, rashes, or burns. Surgeons and physicians relied on apothecaries for the appropriate medicines, potions, ointments, and other *materia medica* considered useful at the time. By the sixteenth century most cities were hiring communal physicians and surgeons who served the medical needs of all comers. The sick in convents, monasteries, and charitable institutions were tended to by surgeons or physicians who worked on annual retainers, for some an important and steady part of their income.

Many people trusted in the ministrations of quacks and charlatans who offered skills and medicines that often promised miracle cures, or at least provided a lot of opium or alcohol. Speaking of miracles, Italians from medical professors to Sicilian peasants believed in both spiritual causes and spiritual interventions for many conditions. Demons tormented the mentally afflicted and God sent the plague. Prayers to the Virgin Mary and healing saints such as Rocco (Roche) and Sebastian were deemed effective as prophylactics to keep diseases away and as cures for victims. Churches and shrines were literally filled with cheap—and sometimes expensive—memorials *ex voto*, thank-yous, and testaments to the timely intervention of one saint or another. Curses, demons, and the evil eye could bring on illness, and folk in the lower social strata could easily point to the human culprits, be they magicians, witches, sorcerers, or old women who simply “knew things.” Less threateningly, such people were often the sources of medicinal roots, herbs,

mushrooms, and other natural remedies. Though they were probably a lot cheaper, these ingredients were identical to some of those sold by trained apothecaries. Both apothecaries and naturopathic healers might also provide talismans and amulets whose power was somewhere between spiritual and physical. For example, a silver ring featuring a stone carved with the image of a poisonous scorpion—a zodiacal cooling water sign—was considered effective protection against fevers and poisons.

Treat-Them-Yourself Childhood Illnesses

In *The Midwife* (1596), physician Friar Girolamo Mercurio listed infant complaints that he believed were caused by humoral imbalances and could be treated at home. Internal illnesses were worms, body aches, intestinal blockage, constipation, diarrhea, the stone, urine retention, bedwetting, vomiting, hiccups, teething pain, tongue ulceration, earaches, strep throat, coughs, breathing problems, convulsions, paralysis, epilepsy, shriveled body, swollen body, fevers, and chicken pox. External ones were cradle cap, lice, water on the brain, inflamed eyes, crossed eyes, scrofula, umbilical inflammation, and distended colon. For more serious conditions, parents should see a physician.

Source: Bell, Rudolph. *How to Do It: Guides to Good Living for Renaissance Italians*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999, p. 151.

For most ailments people relied on family members for treatment. Mothers traditionally cared for their children and husbands through all but the most serious complaints. Mothers and fathers frequented apothecary shops to purchase both medicinal ingredients and prepared medications. They purchased “patent” medicines from traveling empirics and from barber shops and taverns that sold them on commission. Village life was maintained by folk techniques for extracting poisons, preventing infections, and setting broken or cracked bones. Even girls at court and patricians’ daughters learned valuable first aid and old family recipes for supposedly effective intervention. In literate households these were often written down; they even appear in merchants’ *ricordanze*. With the advent of printing vernacular collections of these were soon targeting Italy’s middle class. So-called Books of Secrets often contained numerous supposedly proven medicinal recipes, featuring readily available ingredients and simple preparations. *Secrets of the Reverend don Alessio Piemonte* (1555) was an early and successful version with remedies for conditions from hangovers and toothache to plague and paralysis. Fully one-third of its 350 entries were medical in nature. Other titles were specifically medical, such as Giovanni Battista Zapata’s *Marvelous Secrets of Medicine and Surgery* of 1586.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Birth and Midwives; Childhood; Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing; Old Age; *Fashion and Appearance*: Scents and Perfumes; *Food and Drink*: Drugs; Galenic Health Regimens; Nutrition: A Modern Assessment; *Housing and Community*: Barbers and Surgeons; Physicians; Plague; Villages and Village Life; Violence within the Household and Community; *Religion and Beliefs*: Memorials *Ex Voto*; Saints and Their Cults; Witches and Sorcerers; *Science and Technology*: Disease and Humoral Medicine; Secrets, Books of

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HERALDRY

Knights in shining armor; fair damsels waving on their heroes; a lord waiting to reward the champion—but who was who on the field of honor? From the twelfth century, knights adopted colors and symbols that they displayed on their shields to distinguish them from others. At a tournament, the herald was the expert at identifying these, and his craft became known as heraldry. Nobility and knighthood fused, and by the fourteenth century the jurist Bartolus opined that nearly anyone—above a laborer or peasant—deserved to have a coat of arms. Since nobility was granted by kings, popes, or emperors, and had come to be passed down in families, however, there was in fact an order to the adoption and use of these displays. After his noble-born wife had on at least one occasion put down her bourgeois husband, fourteenth-century Tuscan merchant Francesco Datini bought a coat of arms from the emperor and had both hers and his prominently depicted in their Prato palazzo.

Renaissance-era Italians of noble descent often displayed family symbols with or on their coats of arms. The Colonna of Rome used a column, the Della Rovere an oak, and the Della Scala a ladder, each of which was a translation of the family name. Perhaps most famously, the non-noble Medici of Florence adopted a set of balls, *palle*, as their symbol. When needed, pro-Medici mobs ran through Florence's street crying "*pah-leh, pah-leh*" in support of the city's controversial first family. They have also come to represent pawn shops. They appear in various ways on escutcheons (display shields) throughout Tuscany, and on monuments by or to Medici popes in Rome. Rulers and noble families marked what they considered theirs with their arms. Churches displayed—and still do—donors' or supporters' escutcheons on façades, portals, bell towers, doors, windows, tombstones, candles and can-

dlesticks, altars, linen, vestments, Mass and choir books, instruments for Mass, organs, altarpieces, *ex voto* memorials, and tabernacles; and in sacristies and family chapels. The civic-minded marked loggias, bridges, gates, hospitals, orphanages, monasteries and convents, and fountains in whose construction or repair they played a part. Like Datini, the wealthy used family or personal arms or symbols profligately throughout and on the exterior of their palazzi. Doorways, windows, and prominent street corners featured carved and painted stone escutcheons; room and hall frescoes repeated the theme; and furniture and furnishings of any value sported the markings. Decorated shields hung on walls; marked harpsichords sat in corners; plates, glassware, and tableware bearing the insignias were displayed on credenzas that themselves identified their owners. Jewelry, plaquettes, medals,



The Young Knight (1510) by Venetian and northern Italian painter Vittore Carpaccio (1460–1526) is probably a portrait of the youthful Duke Francesco Maria I della Rovere of Urbino. Clad in the fashionable armor of the day, the young man stands outside a castle gate and is surrounded by symbols of his nobility. Oil on canvas. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

weapons, saddles, and anything that might be lent to a church or other group, or displayed on holidays, bore the owners' arms.

At Italian courts, the lord marked almost anything visible with his arms, including his servants' livery. As favors to artists, musicians, and writers, he granted the right to use his arms and even personal emblem. When painter Andrea Mantegna joined Ludovico Gonzaga's court at Mantua, the marchese provided moving expenses, a house, grain, firewood, cloth for court costume, and the privilege of displaying—publicly or privately—Ludovico's arms and emblem of a radiant sun. Gonzaga was not only noting Mantegna's new position but was also recognizing his skill and other virtues. As early as the thirteenth century, Venice, always in pursuit of civic stability, forbade the use of a family's arms by any nonmember, lest it signal adherence to a family-led faction. Public servants could not even wear their own, being limited to the city's logo of the city's patron St. Mark. In 1384 Florentine cathedral authorities had all arms removed from tombs built around the great church, declaring that it was a communal center, not a place for personal aggrandizement.

In 1451, in honor of a new military alliance, Florence's priors had the arms of Milan's Francesco Sforza painted on and above the doors to the Room of the Signoria in the civic Palazzo. Displaying the arms of allies or patrons, such as the pope or king of France, sent an important political message. Streets were filled with foreign arms and symbols when important visitors arrived, major alliances or victories were celebrated, or dynastic weddings took place. Use of the fleur-de-lys had been granted by the French and remains a symbol of Florence. During much of the Renaissance it also served as a reminder of the old Guelf axis of Papacy, France, and Florence, just as the eagle of the Hohenstauffen emperors appeared in Ghibelline cities such as Pisa.

While such symbols were not strictly speaking heraldry, they served the same purposes. The she-wolf of Rome and Siena, the lion of Venice (San Marco) and Florence (Marzocco, "little Mars"), Perugia's and Genoa's griffin, even St. Peter's crossed keys representing the Papacy (officially adopted in the fifteenth century) identified major cities or institutions and nodded to their histories and myths. By the fifteenth century corporate entities within cities also had "arms" that were displayed permanently or on special occasions. Neighborhoods (*contrade*), guilds, confraternities, notaries, political factions, universities, academies, even civic offices adopted arms-like logos that appeared on street corners, flags and banners, funeral paraphernalia, ceremonial costumes, and official documents.

Just as jousting and tournaments survived into the sixteenth century, so did heralds in Italian cities and courts. For example, Florence appointed its head of heralds in 1350, and the office maintained records of major ceremonies and appropriate protocols and symbols, especially those involving foreign visitors or entries. Its holder was also the city's poet laureate.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Courtly; Art Patronage; Ceramics, Decorative; Portraits; Sculpture; *Economics and Work:* Guilds; *Family and Gender:* Families, Noble and Patrician; *Fashion and Appearance:* Livery; *Food and Drink:* Tools for Cooking and Eating; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and *Piazze*; Palazzi; Patronage; *Politics and Warfare:* Art, Civic; Guelfs, Ghibellines, and Other Political Factions; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Civic Festivals; *Religion and Beliefs:* Chapels; Churches

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HOMOSEXUALITY AND SODOMY

The term homosexual was unknown to the Renaissance era. The male who engaged in certain sexual activities committed what was called sodomy, and if he did so frequently he was labeled a sodomite. The term was taken from the Bible story of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, which were supposedly destroyed by God for participating in and encouraging male-on-male sexual activity. St. Paul in the New Testament condemned such activity, as did Renaissance-era preachers and law codes. *Sodomia* was considered not only sinful but also detrimental to families and societies repopulating themselves, especially in the wake of plague epidemics. Although some men never married and were noted for their sexual attraction to young men or boys, there is no sign of there having been either a self- or societal recognition of a "gay identity" or "lifestyle." The vast majority of those prosecuted for sodomy were either married men or men as yet unprepared for marriage. Popularly defined, sodomy included male anal sex, masturbation between another's legs, and male oral sex. When legally defined it could include heterosexual anal sex, lesbian sexual stimulation, and even bestiality; essentially

any non-reproductive sexual activity was included. In the popular imagination, the last led to births of half-human half-animal monsters. For its part, lesbian activity, though believed to have been a feature of convent life, left few traces in surviving records. Monks, being celibate, were imagined in popular culture as sodomites among themselves, and some saw celibate friars as threats to young boys. Artists such as Donatello, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Botticelli, and the aptly nicknamed Sodoma were associated with sodomy, though evidence remains scanty. A few philosophers distinguished homoeroticism—the sexual attraction to members of one’s own sex—from sodomy as an activity. They considered the attraction to male beauty an uplifting and higher order pleasure, whereas raw sex was considered an animal pursuit, less willed than instinctual.

Best studied through Florentine records, sodomy seems to have been largely a matter of mature men performing the “male” role in sexual acts with willing younger men, though cases of rape were reported. Michael Rocke’s seminal study of Florentine activity concluded that 95% of those noted by official records as male “passive” partners were aged 12 to 19, where only 10% of active partners were over age 50. Some couples lasted over time, but far more typical were meetings at night or during festivals when prying eyes were absent or distracted. Certain neighborhoods, taverns (the Boco and the Del Lino), inns, alleys, pastry shops, and even workshops and church porches were noted meeting places. Evidence, too, points to certain private houses where young men were taught fencing or dancing. Sodomitical activity was also associated with female prostitution, gambling, and drinking. Networks of sodomites are identified in records.

According to Ruggiero, fourteenth-century Venetians popularly viewed sodomy as part of growing up for a boy living in a city teeming with foreign and Italian merchants and sailors. After 1400 attitudes apparently changed, as the preference for other males seemed to have lasted too long in life. Nobles were first prosecuted for sodomy in 1406, and the Council of Sodomites was established under the Council of Ten in 1418. In Florence, clergy circulated broadsides against sodomy in 1415. The crime fell under the jurisdiction of several offices prior to 1432, when Florence set up the Office of the Night, in large part to combat sodomy. Fiery preaching by Franciscan St. Bernardino of Siena across central Italy in the 1420s and 1430s spawned anti-sodomite legislation; and in Florence that was reinforced in the 1490s during the reform movement under Dominican Girolamo Savonarola. Bernardino blamed parents, railing that fathers presented their sons to friends for sex, and mothers dressed their boys up as girls to entice the perverted. “Passive” youth, usually below age 18 (though in Venice age 14 from 1424), were usually not prosecuted, and their activity was often not even considered sodomy for legal purposes. “Active” males, on the other hand, could face very stiff penalties: in fourteenth-century Venice decapitation; Ferrara hanging; and burning at the stake

in most other places. Such harsh penalties were rarely applied, and commutations to fines, corporal punishments, prison sentences, and exile were common; in Lucca the death penalty applied only to men over age 50.

Rocke's study of Florence claims what some scholars consider exaggerated rates of sodomy. During the life of the Office of the Night (1432–1502) 15,000 people were implicated, of whom 3,000 were convicted. Yet Florence was indeed known as a place where sodomy was common. To Germans, *Florenzer* was synonymous with sodomite, and in Venice from 1392 to 1402, 80% of prosecutions for the act were of visiting or resident Florentines. Between 1432 and 1542 Florentines passed no fewer than 17 amendments to its laws against sodomy. In 1502 Florence's post-Savonarola government disbanded the Office of the Night in part because it highlighted the prevalence of sodomy.

See also: *Arts*: Novella; *Family and Gender*: Childhood; *Virtù* and Honor; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Children; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Pornography and Erotica

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Husbands. *See* **Wives and Husbands**

Illness. *See* **Health and Illness**

INFANCY, NURSING, AND WET NURSING

The first few years of life were perilous for the young Italian. Having survived his or her entry into the world, the child faced new dangers of all sorts, from microbial to human. Pathogens assaulted the infant from the air, food and water, insects, and even small wounds. Siblings, pets, servants, caregivers, even parents presented inadvertent threats from dropping, biting, rough-housing, smothering, burning or scalding, scratching, and even crushing. Renaissance-era versions of cradle death or sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) appear all too often in surviving homicide reports. Usually immobilized by swaddling clothes, young children had no real defenses apart from wailing in fear, pain, or hunger. The practice of having the newborn fed by a surrogate mother, or wet nurse, added a layer of uncertainty, since the parents'—especially the mother's—natural concern and defensiveness were separated from their object.

After giving birth, and assuming she was healthy, the mother was given space by the household to welcome her circle of women. From her bed, cleaned and decorated for the occasion, she assured them of her good fortune and condition and presented her new child to them. If they were of the upper classes, they brought gifts of candies and fruit, placed elegantly on specially decorated wooden or ceramic platters. Some of the earliest matters, however, directly concerned the father. The mother remained at home while the child was baptized at the local parish church or central baptistery. Naming the child's godparents was also the father's responsibility, as was naming the child. If he had decided to have the child nursed by another woman, he and the woman's husband drew up and signed a contract to that effect.

The old idea that Renaissance-era parents were at best indifferent to their young children has been under assault for decades. Paintings, letters, *ricordanze*, and other evidence depict parents as strongly attached to their offspring, even when they sent them away to be nursed. Mother's milk was consistently held to be the best and, by most commentators, only food that a baby needed. Medical science held that the biological mother's milk was made of her blood, the same blood that had fed the child in the womb. Though altered in the mother's body, this specific milk had the same humoral balance as the mother and was thus best for the baby in the world. Milk from another woman was therefore inferior though not necessarily dangerous. When human milk was in short supply, as during plague and in certain institutions, goat's milk was considered the best alternative. Preachers and published medical men emphasized the importance of mother and child bonding through breastfeeding. Also current was the notion that a woman's personality traits and character were transferred through her milk, which reinforced arguments for women feeding their own children, for who can truly know the character of a rural wet nurse?

As with pregnancy and birthing, caring for the infant was an important part of a woman's world, whether that was poor and rural or wealthy and urban. Midwives often availed themselves to new mothers, especially if the child was her first or second, or was unhealthy. Female relatives, neighbors, friends, and specialists such as herbalists, apothecaries, charlatans, and surgeons stood ready to offer advice and help when needed. In the age of plague, a child's survival was a communal concern. Advice books also provided suggestions on when and how much to feed, how to judge the child's health from excrement and urine, and how to monitor one's own or a nurse's quality of milk. Nursing mothers also suffered ailments. What today is diagnosed as post-partum depression was not unknown, and some medical records point to cases of vascular blockages and problematic nipples that made suckling all but impossible. Published Books of Secrets and other sources of advice aimed at women are filled with recipes for salves, ointments, plasters, potions, and other remedies for nursing mothers. Since gynecological matters remained largely in other women's hands, and pediatrics was in its infancy, professional medical literature had little to add.

Children born to servants, slaves, or young single mothers were at the mercy of the father if he acknowledged his relationship and remained close by. Local laws might require that he marry the mother, especially in cases of rape. He might adopt the child and raise him or her as his, a move certain to alienate his legitimate children and probably his wife. The unfortunate child was abandoned to a foundling home or even infanticide.

Wet nursing may not have been as widespread among upper-class families as once thought. It benefitted mothers, whose breasts were not distended with milk; couples did not have to wake to feed; and a mother could more readily become pregnant again. Wealthy families often housed and fed the wet nurse, ensuring she stayed healthy and overseeing her activities. This was considered preferable to placing the infant in the nurse's household, where he or she was at the nurse's—and her family's—mercy.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; Slaves and Slavery; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Birth and Midwives; Childhood; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Health and Illness; Names, Personal and Family; Servants, Household; Wives and Husbands; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; *Religion and Beliefs*: Sacraments, Catholic; *Science and Technology*: Secrets, Books of

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INHERITANCE

Families were not static structures. They expanded and contracted through birth, death, marriage, annulment, exile, relocation, adoption, emancipation, and other processes that were natural, social, or legal. The higher the status and greater the wealth of a family, the larger it was likely to be. A palazzo could house family members of four generations, and after a war or epidemic the stable center of the family had to absorb unfortunate refugee, dispossessed, or orphaned relatives. Italian legal systems descended from Germanic and/or Roman law, which privileged males and recognized the patriarchal family structure as the default. This directly affected the ways in which a family could handle property, goods, and land and structures. This became crucial at the point when property moved from one generation to another, especially with the death of the ruling household head.

Within a given jurisdiction, local laws, custom, or tradition could also play roles in inheritance patterns. As Cohn has shown, families in Perugia, Florence, and Arezzo sought to keep wealth concentrated in the hands of legitimate male heirs. Cities influenced by religious considerations, such as Assisi, Pisa, and Siena, saw broader distributions of wealth through wills that enriched women and the Church as well as sons.

The simple rule was that legitimate sons were the heirs of their father's wealth. Legitimate daughters had two acceptable fates, the nunnery or marriage. In both cases she received a set portion of family wealth from her father in the form of a dowry, which included cash and goods and sometimes land. A study of fifteenth-century Florentines reveals that the value of a dowry was between 55% and 80% of what a son/heir would receive at that point. One's widow had a right only to the return of her dowry. In the absence of legitimate sons, the next in line would not be a man's daughters or wife, but his brothers and their sons, and then

his cousins on his father's side and their sons. Lacking any relatives sharing his last name, the man making his last will (testator) could divide his wealth in whatever way he saw fit. A well-known example was the very wealthy merchant of Prato, Francesco Datini. His wife had brought no dowry, so he set her up for as long as she did not remarry and remained honorable. They had had no children, and he had no relatives on his side. His illegitimate daughter he dowered and married off. He made many small gifts through his will, but the bulk went to found a charitable institution in Prato. Through his will, this became his "heir."

Had Francesco sired a son with his servant, instead of a daughter, he could have chosen to adopt him as his heir, or simply named him as heir had he chosen to do so. A father with legitimate sons who also had a male child with a woman other than his wife had some difficult choices. If he adopted the boy and put him on the same level as his own legitimate sons, then at least they had grounds for resentment and to challenge the adoption to protect their interests. If he did not adopt, then his and the boy's honor remained stained and the boy's future opportunities limited.

When Francesco was a boy, both his parents died in the Black Death in 1348. The wills of his father, Marco, survive and reflect the changes in its terms as the people he mentioned as recipients of gifts, executors, or guardians for his two boys died. Francesco and his brother—who disappears from the record—received a modest inheritance and a good guardian. Many orphaned boys, however, did not receive selfless care. Though an infant or child could inherit even a vast estate, he could not protect or manage it. In Orvieto after the Black Death there was documented a real problem of children's unscrupulous relatives and even named guardians essentially stealing their wards' wealth. Laws tightened on who could be named guardian: it could not be someone who would benefit from the child's death. Mothers were the default guardians, though in some cities they lacked the legal ability to sign contracts or make certain financial arrangements. From 1383 the Florentine Office of Wards had power over dependent children under 18 and insane people. Officers created detailed inventories of everything testators left behind and managed business and financial resources. Venice maintained a similar bureau.

Because the head of the family, or *paterfamilias*, had complete authority over his children, he could do as he saw fit when it came to distributing his wealth. Many made large bequests to local churches or religious orders, or made lavish arrangements for their own memorialization. By the sixteenth century traditional partible inheritance, by which all sons received a more or less even share in the patrimony, was being replaced in fact by primogeniture. Literally "first born," this pattern of inheritance privileged the eldest son with the bulk of the estate, including land and business interests. This served the old purpose of keeping wealth concentrated in a few hands rather than having it scattered. Rising expectations for dowry values led to a similar trend, in which only one daughter married with the rest relegated to convents.

As for a mother's heirs, there were no set expectations. She could have the resources returned to her family; have them assigned as part of daughters' dowries; bequeath them directly to daughters or female relatives; or, as often happened, leave them to her husband.

See also: *Arts*: Women and the Arts; *Economics and Work*: Notaries; *Family and Gender*: Dowries; Education of Children; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Fostering, Step Children, and Adoption; Last Wills and Testaments; Siblings; Widows; Wives and Husbands

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LAST WILLS AND TESTAMENTS

One's last will and testament was a legal, officially registered document that transferred that person's wealth to designated recipients after his or her death. It was drawn up by a notary who followed strict language derived from Roman law, thereby creating a contract with future administrators and heirs. The notary kept a record of the terms and filed these with the civic government, and the testator received a full copy of the legal Latin version if she or he wished. These records survive by the thousands and today provide invaluable pictures of people's hopes, fears, piety, social ties, property, debts, and family structures. Because they usually follow strict formulas, their data is comparable across Italy and the Renaissance era.

Following Roman precedent, wills were carefully dated; the recording notary and all witnesses identified; the place—church, home, hospital, office, convent—noted; and the testator's identity, parish, and sometimes occupation listed. Anyone with property and heirs was expected to create a will, and surviving documents represent all but the indigent classes of society. Wills normally indicated whether the testator was well or ill, and sometimes the reason for recording

his or her wishes, or changing an existing document. With the Black Death of 1348 the father of merchant Francesco Datini had to alter his will several times as those he named executor or the guardians of his children died and had to be replaced. Heirs, too, died, and arrangements adjusted. Many documents state that the threat of plague induced the testator, though pregnancy, travel, illness, and old age and fear of death also appear.

Big-ticket items included property and buildings and business assets. These usually fell to sons or eldest surviving sons, though business assets, especially, could land in the hands of the most competent of the brothers. Unmarried girls might have their dowries stipulated, or money to convents that received them as novices. Widows had a right to return of their dowries, remains of which they could later distribute to whom they pleased. A widow might also be provided with a house and additional resources, especially if her dowry had been small and her family had grown richer. Such largesse, however, was often limited: should she remarry she lost all except her dowry. All of these distributions are of interest to social historians who seek to understand better the nature of family relations. Economic historians study lists of debts owed by the testator, with the intention of “clearing the slate.” Seeing that all terms of the will were observed was the legal duty of the chosen executor or executors, some of whom might be heirs themselves.

For many, however, greater interest lies in how people chose to share their bequests with those beyond the family. Some gifts were mandated: to Florence’s cathedral, or one’s parish or pastor. Many went to faithful servants, and slaves might be freed and provided with a stipend. Small bequests might also go to helpful neighbors, health care providers, and clergy who provided solace at the end of life. Belief in the afterlife included the idea that a soul that had not repented of all of its sins would end up in purgatory, a place of intense spiritual cleansing. The Church taught that one could avoid this by performing charitable acts during life and even through one’s will. Consequently, wills are filled with charitable bequests, many labeled “for the soul” or “for love of God.” Pittance went to poor mourners at the funeral; larger amounts helped dower poor young girls seeking husbands; gifts of cloth helped clothe poor families; and in southern Italy money helped ransom hostages held by Barbary pirates. Large bequests went to support religious orders: especially mendicants, whose voluntary poverty was believed to make their prayers especially powerful. This, too, was part of the “contract.” Recipients of charitable giving were expected to pray on behalf of the testator’s soul, hastening his or her entry into paradise. Many wills contain instructions for funerals and burial, as well as funds for black clothing, candles, Mass, and feasting after the event. These could be lavish affairs, and cities tended to curb them with sumptuary laws.

Women and Wills

In a society that limited women's participation in legal and civic affairs due to their supposed "weakness," matters surrounding wills proved empowering. Middle-class Venetian women shared their wealth with neighbor women, especially those with children, and women across Italy helped fund dowries for poor girls. Bequests to women provided them a measure of financial independence, leading some towns to restrict gifts outside families. Women served as executors and thus managed testators' choices of property division, funerary arrangements, memorial art, artistic gifts to churches, and a host of other decisions normally left to male family members.

Bequests to religious institutions might be very specific. Many were vestments, artworks, and metalware used in services or to decorate the church. These directly associated the donor with the sacred space and the Mass, and were often marked with his or her name or family crest. Less self-serving were funds to repair leaking roofs or rotted doors; even more self-serving was the establishment within churches of chapels decorated and supported by bequests. Of course, only elites could afford such extravagance, though in the wake of the Black Death many did, including fancy tombs for themselves and space for future family burials. Much of the art that fills museums was produced as bequests and placed behind or around altars in churches and chapels. Many frescoes that grace Italian churches were donations by guilt-ridden or thankful testators.

Finally, heirs had a right to an accounting of every coin, button, spoon, and piece of land that was being passed along. A notary and other trustworthy men would note and sometimes value everything the testator possessed in life, recording all in a probate inventory. To executors these were necessary to fulfill their roles; to modern historians these are invaluable windows into Renaissance-era life.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Sacred; Women and the Arts; *Economics and Work*: Notaries; *Family and Gender*: Death, Funerals, and Burial; Dowries; Inheritance; Servants, Household; Widows; *Fashion and Appearance*: Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Poor, Aid to; *Religion and Beliefs*: Chapels; Churches; Friars

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Marriage. *See* Espousal and Wedding

Midwives. *See* Birth and Midwives

NAMES, PERSONAL AND FAMILY

Italian names can be confusing at first glance. The Tuscan merchant Francesco di Marco Datini da Prato was in his own day often referred to merely as Francesco *il Ricco*, the Rich. His popular baptismal or Christian name, Francesco, was in honor of St. Francis (San Francesco) of Assisi, his patron saint. Francesco was itself a name derived from the Italian word for Frenchman, and the saint of Assisi made it acceptable as a Christian name. Francesco’s father was Marco, as indicated by the Italian *di*, one way of saying “of”; thus di Marco is a patronymic (father’s name). Another way he could have expressed this is to use the Latin genitive (possessive) form Francesco Marchi (Mahr’-kee). Marco’s father was Datino, and Marco may have used Datini as his patronymic; Francesco is generally known to history as Francesco Datini, a name that almost never appears in his own papers. If he had had legitimate sons, they would probably have used Datini as a cognomen or family name. Since Francesco, like Marco, was from and later lived in the town of Prato, and since both Francesco and Marco were quite common names in Florence where Francesco did business, he was known there as Francesco di Marco *da* (from) Prato, to distinguish him from, say, Francesco di Marco da Pisa or Francesco di Marco Romano. As the wealthiest man in Prato he deserved the nickname *il Ricco*, though he feared it caused his taxes to be high.

Christian Italian men formally received their names at baptism. In Florence, Lucca, Bologna, and elsewhere two or even three names were chosen, usually by the father, and presented at the church. These could be a paternal grandfather’s

name, so that eldest sons' names recur every other generation. They might be other common family names or those of godparents, that of a family patron saint, or the saint celebrated on the day of birth: Lorenzo, Cosimo, Antonio, Domenico, or Girolamo (Jerome). Many names come from the New Testament—Taddeo, Pietro, Paolo, Bartolomeo, Simone—though few from the Old, except among Jews. Giovanni and its shortened forms Vanni or Nanni were popular; since the Gospels include two Johns, Battista (Baptist) often stood alone or in combination, as in Leonbattista. Many northern Italian male names were Germanic, perhaps dating from Lombard or Frankish times: Bernardo, Gualtiero, Guglielmo, Federigo, Alberto, or Ghiberto. Among upper classes and humanists old Roman names appeared: Cesare, Enea, Giulio, Ottavio, Orazio, Aurelio, and Costantino, as well as Greek or Trojan: Achille, Ettore, Omero, and Ercole. Feudal families sometimes gave chivalric names, including Galeazzo (Galahad), Arturo, Orlando (Roland), and Lancelotto. Shortened forms were often used—Meo for Bartolomeo, Cecco for Francesco, and Cola for Nicolò—as were diminutives such as Bernardino, Antonino, Masolino (Little Thomas), or Donatello. One could move in the other direction by adding—accio or—uccio, as in Masaccio (Big or Bad Thomas). Descriptive nicknames also appear: Sodoma the painter and Gattamelata (Honey-cat) the mercenary general. In southern Italy Greek and Spanish names or derivatives were common for both men and women. Since the common Latin masculine ending—*us* becomes—*o* in Italian, most male names end in *o*. Today any male is addressed as *signore*, but in the Renaissance era *Signore* was the title of a lord, including God. Notaries were usually identified with *Ser*, and knights (by rank if not profession) with *Messer*. *Fra* (short for *frater*, brother) indicated a friar and often a monk.

A married woman was addressed as Monna or Mona, short for Madonna, or my lady, while Donna indicated a woman of rank; nuns went by Suor (Sister). *Signora* indicated a noblewoman, while “wife of” or “was wife of” equated to Mrs. or widow. Women's given names appear infrequently in official records, so our knowledge of them is restricted. Often they were from the maternal side of the family, and many were recycled from older sisters who had died. Biblical names such as Anna, Maria, Elisabetta, Angela, Maddalena, and Marta, and saints' names—Margherita, Felicità, Cecilia, Clara, and Caterina—probably predominated. Feminine forms of male saints' names were also common: Antonia, Filippa, Martina, Nicola, Vittoria, Francesca, and Giovanna, whereas only Maria appears sometimes in male names, as Giangaleazzo Maria Visconti, Lord of Milan, or the masculine form Mario. Girls also received descriptive names such as Beatrice (blessed), Bianca (white), Bona (good), or Fiametta (little flame). Popularized by the poet Petrarch was Laura, which he deconstructed into images including gold (*l'oro*; Latin *aurum*), breeze (*l'aura*), dawn (*aurora*), and the evergreen laurel.

Names from France or Germany appear as Ludovica, Alberta, Isabella, and Carla, and Classical Roman names with Lucrezia, Livia, Giulia, Faustina, Aurelia, and Adriana. Chivalric names such as Ginevra—Italian for both Geneva (Switzerland) and Arthur’s Queen Guinevere—are rarer. Italian endings such as *-etta* and *-ina* could feminize a male name (Antonina) or indicate a diminutive (Betta, Bettina for Elisabetta). In daily life nicknames often replaced given names, especially for little girls.

Godparents

The newborn’s father chose his child’s godparents. Originally reliant on kin, by the Renaissance the choice had become strategic, especially for elite families. A godfather and godmother were the norm, but often several of each—or in the Veneto dozens—were tied to the family through this spiritual kinship. Godfathers outnumbered godmothers as important local men agreed to the honor; Lorenzo Il Magnifico presented the traditional white vest to dozens of children of his supporters. At baptism they represented the Christian community and bestowed the child’s name. The Council of Trent weakened their social role by allowing only two godparents.

Family names might derive from an ancestor (Datini, Giovanetti), ancestor’s occupation (Medici, Cambi), ancient title (Visconti), family estate name, city or region of origin (Romano, Pisani, Fiorentino, Veronese), Italianized form of a foreign name (Acuto for the English “Hawkwood”), or even an ancient nickname: Pazzi (madmen), Carnesecchi (dried meat), or Sozzini (from *sozzo*, filthy). Nobles utilized family names earliest, to indicate membership in a clan of high status. By the 1200s wealthy city families began adopting last names, and most peasants had no family name beyond “son of” or “from,” if any. In 1427, 36.7% of Florentine families (9,821 total) claimed a family name (cognomen). Some old clans could have many offshoots: in the same 1427 tax census there were 60 distinct Bardi families, 53 Strozzi, 31 de’Medici, and 28 Peruzzi families. *Dei* means “of” or “from” something plural, when masculine usually spelled with an *-i*, and is often shortened to *de’*, as in de’Medici (“of the physicians”). Many families dropped the di or dei, as did the Morelli, originally dei Morelli.

See also: *Arts:* Antiquity, Cult of; Portraits; *Family and Gender:* Birth and Midwives; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; *Housing and Community:* Foreign Communities; Neighborhood and Parish; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Chapels; Jews and Judaism; Sacraments, Catholic; Saints and Their Cults

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Nursing. See *Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing*

OLD AGE

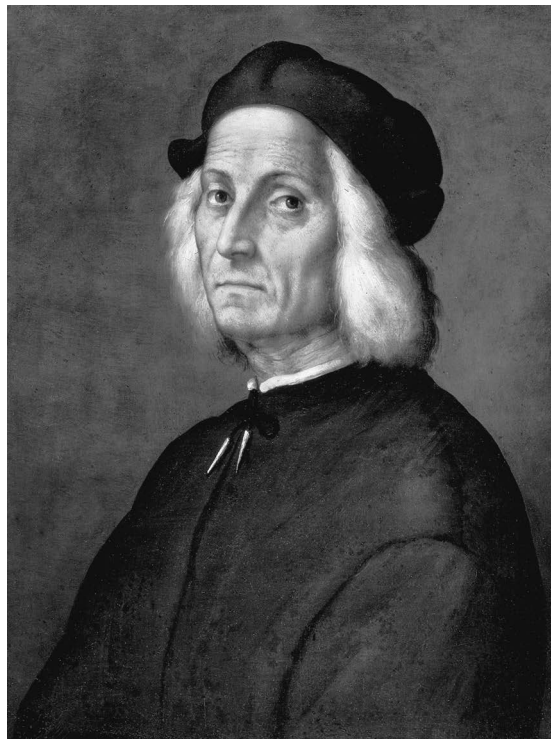
Dante judged the onset of old age to be at 47; senility came after 70, when one surpassed the biblical allotment of 70 years. Humanist Matteo Palmieri believed that a man's virility ended at 57 and decrepitude set in at 70. Poetess Moderata Fonte adopted Cicero's span of 45 to 50. The first medical book to deal with old age was *Gerontocomia* (1489), by Gabriele Zerbi, a physician of Padua, Rome, and Bologna. For Zerbi, the decline into old age began between the ages of 30 and 40. Just as one's early years added size, strength, knowledge, skills, sexual potency, and fertility, so past some point—though probably not as early as one's thirties—these things began to fade. For medical men such as Zerbi, however, women's menopause was a major turning point. They viewed menstrual fluid as a poison that a healthy woman's body eliminated. When the flow permanently ceased, the toxins built up and adversely affected her physically, mentally, and emotionally. Her warm and moist humoral qualities shifted to cold and dry. No longer fertile, a woman's principal role in society ended and she became largely superfluous. In males, too, the humoral complexion turned colder as age drained strength, libido, and memory. Hair disappeared, as did teeth and muscle mass. Hearing lost its acuity, and sight its ability to focus. Illness became more common, joints ached, and eventually one could hardly get along by oneself.

Yet Italian society did recognize the value of age. In Venice a man's political life began at 40, and to serve on the Senate (*senex* = old man) he had to be at least 60. Doges were often elderly, as were most popes. Humanist Cassandra Fedele lived to age 93, Michelangelo to 89, and the painter Titian to 86 or beyond, and then he died of plague. Barring the ravages of time, which after all differed from person to person, age brought judgment, experience, knowledge, skill, and wisdom. The passions cooled, but this allowed reason to prevail. In *The Temperate Life*

(1558), humanist Alvise Cornaro reflected on the well-earned leisure that age could bring, if one continued to live a life of moderation with attention to the standard Galenic regimen for good health. As he read in the classics, old age should be the best period of one's life.

But for many, of course, it was far from it. Good health was indeed a major factor, and many had worked themselves to infirmity. From the ulcers of merchants to noblemen's gout and laborers' skeletal problems, it is not surprising that Italians regularly joined their several terms for old age with other such as sick, incapable, infirm, and decrepit. For the working classes, one was expected to work up to one's death, thereby supporting himself or herself to the end. There were no old-age pensions, though there were hospitals, nunneries, monasteries, homes for retired prostitutes, and other facilities to care for the poverty-stricken elderly.

Of course, care of one's parents was supposed to be the responsibility of adult children. In noble and patrician households this was generally honored. The care was in fact a matter of honor to the children and to the dynasty as a whole. The paterfamilias, whatever his age, retained full parental rights even over adult children in most jurisdictions. His widow, too, was to be respected and cared for, though women of this class sometimes retired to nunneries they had supported for the spiritual support and calm they provided. Among the middle and lower classes, children were also expected to care for their parents, though this was often difficult if not impossible. In these cases the strength of the family across generations was the key. Whether a spouse's widowed mother came to live could be a contentious issue, and caring for a blind or disabled father could put a real strain on a working family's resources. On the other hand, a grandmother could help with light chores



Under cottony white hair, sad but proud eyes look out over gaunt cheeks and a wrinkly neck in this undated and unidentified *Portrait of an Old Man* by Florentine Ridolfo Ghirlandaio (1483–1561), son of the more famous Domenico. Oil on canvas. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

and child care, and a grandfather could present a family's male face when the father was away. Here, too, honor made its demands.

The Art of Dying Well

Life was a preparation for death; but the hours immediately before were key to making the passage into the afterlife. The *Ars moriendi*, or *Art of Dying Well*, was a Renaissance-era (and later) genre of popular devotional literature. Stemming from earlier friars' manuals for confession and often simply illustrated, the texts led the dying to resist demons and temptations, to make a will and otherwise provide for the family, and most of all to embrace the final sacrament—including making a last full and heartfelt confession. Such guides were later published by Jesuits and Protestant pastors alike, evidence of their spiritual value to Christians.

Lacking familial support and an income, older Italians struggled as they could. Older widows still had the right to their dowries, and these funds—often difficult to recover—could support them and a servant adequately. Both men and women might find work as servants, especially if they had useful skills. Older women who had a residence could rent out rooms to transients, students, pilgrims, or laborers, providing a meal or two per day. Some women formed small religious sisterhoods with other widows or spinsters. Some of these established charitable facilities for girls or older women in need of support, and some worked for existing charities. For men and women, the ultimate option, usually thrust upon them, was to be reduced to begging. Fortunately, aiding the elderly poor was considered “good alms” and few donors questioned their worthiness.

See also: *Arts*: Art Patronage; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Woman in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Death, Funerals, and Burial; Dowries; Health and Illness; Last Wills and Testaments; Widows; *Food and Drink*: Galenic Health Regimens; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Poverty and the Poor; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Theater, Popular

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PREGNANCY

The ability to carry a child in the womb was the badge of the married woman. The childless marriage was blamed on the wife, especially if the husband had sired out of wedlock, proving his fitness. Such a marriage was easily annulled on the legal fiction that it had not been consummated. The woman was often sent into a convent or monastery since no other man would want her. This was especially relevant in the wake of the Black Death and the desire to repopulate families. This underlined the importance of her fertility and doing whatever was necessary to deal with any marital problems. Once she was deemed pregnant, the couple had the obligation to protect her and her child so she could carry him or her to full term and successfully give birth to the new member of the family.

Most of the time, in most urban neighborhoods or rural villages, most married women of child-bearing age were probably pregnant or trying to conceive. Those who were not were likely to be nursing or consciously avoiding pregnancy. Though potentially dangerous to the mother, pregnancy was natural and a gift from God. Nevertheless, the uncertainties of outcome could weigh heavily: born alive or still-born, a boy or a girl, healthy or deformed or even monstrous. Would the mother survive and recover fully, survive but suffer or become sterile, live briefly only to die of hemorrhage or fever, or die in the act of giving birth to a new life? The mother's life before birth, however, was filled with as many doubts.

Modern understanding of embryology was unknown to the Renaissance era. Most medical authorities taught that the male sperm shaped the woman's menstrual fluid into milk and what became the baby. Menstruation ceased as the fluid was retained for this purpose. This cessation was one of the seemingly definitive signs of pregnancy. Yet it might also be caused by illness, injury, age, poor nutrition, or excessive work. Other recognized signs included enlargement of the breasts and belly, morning sickness and general irritability caused by imbalances in the humors, discernible changes in the quality and quantity of urine, development of

what women called “the eyes,” and a disinclination to sexual activity as the uterus closed up to secure the fetus. Movement was expected in the fourth month. The “science” of astrology also had its say, as in *The Geniture of People* by Candido Decembrio. Planets govern monthly fetal development, so that during month five Mars might influence hands, fingers, feet, toes, ears, nostrils, mouth, and genitals.

The imperative during pregnancy was to protect the mother and child from physical and psychic harm, to ensure that the mother’s diet and lifestyle were healthy for the baby, and to create an atmosphere of tranquility that moderated her temperament and impressed a sense of well-being on the child. Most pregnant women had to work in addition to caring for children and her husband. Hormonal changes and imbalances caused by the growing child affected the mother’s ability to chase toddlers and carry out even simple tasks nimbly. The great threat was accident or assault and resulting miscarriage. Advice-givers provided plenty of ways to avoid these, including amulets, charms, carrying a bit of clay in the pocket, and a daily snack of breadcrumbs with shed snakeskin. Attendance at Mass and prayers to the Virgin Mary—especially the rosary—were powerful prophylactics that also helped protect from spells and curses. Exertion was hardly avoidable, but could be fatal. Dancing, sneezing, or deep laughter could affect the baby. Even so, moderate exercise was necessary to expel excess uterine humors. Many women wore special amulets and girdles meant to draw the child’s head upward and away from the birth canal lest he or she decide to exit early. Some manuals advise against certain body positions, especially as the child grew, and overly restrictive clothing.

Physicians tapped Galenic medicine advising moderation in all aspects of life. “Hot” foods helped shape the male child, but needed to be balanced with cold. Humid and cold foods, such as fish or fruit, were best avoided for the same reason: they supported the female sex. Dr. Michele Savonarola also recommended avoiding foods that promoted menstruation, such as cabbage, lima beans, and well-known herbs. Physicians also recognized unusual food cravings as normal, but warned against giving into them too often. Nausea, flatulence, and constipation were also considered normal, and care had to be taken in administering purgatives whose violent action could result in miscarriage. All medicines should have no more than moderate effects on the body. Sex during pregnancy had to be only moderately vigorous, lest it dislodge the baby. Some believed the male presence during sex helped shape the fetus, especially in a male direction.

For the mother’s sake and to help imprint positively on the baby, the atmosphere of the home was to be tranquil, pious, and touched by beautiful images and fragrant smells. The mother’s temperament helped shape the baby’s, and fear, anger, or frustration was considered unhealthy. A mother’s fears could become imprinted physically on the child: tiger stripes or wolf hair. The inability to obtain a desired object could lead to spontaneous abortion. Pictures and figurines of small

children, the Madonna and Child, the pregnant Mary visiting her pregnant cousin Elizabeth, or St. Ann protecting Mary and Jesus were considered to be both emotionally soothing and of spiritual significance.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Birth and Midwives; Fertility, Conception, and Contraception; Wives and Husbands; *Food and Drink*: Drugs; Galenic Health Regimens; *Housing and Community*: Villages and Village Life; *Religion and Beliefs*: Magic; Witches and Sorcerers

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Separation. *See* Divorce, Separation, and Annulment

SERVANTS, HOUSEHOLD

In a publication of 1543, Francesco Priscianese listed over 100 specific servant positions that could be found in a Roman household. Of course, this meant households of the rich and powerful, cardinals and nobility, even the papal household. Yet few needed all 100. Nonetheless, an estimated 265 served the papal court of Medici Pope Leo X. In 1384 Mantua's Gonzaga lord's household consisted of about 500 people, of whom around 200 could be designated servants, the remaining 300 being retainers, courtiers, ladies-in-waiting, astrologers, clients, administrators, secretaries, musicians, and other functionaries. As Dukes-to-be of Milan, the Sforza Counts of Pavia employed about 40 servants, a number that rose to over 200 once they attained the higher title. Isabella d'Este of Mantua traveled with 93 servants and 80 horses. Duke Cosimo I de' Medici's Florentine court was served by some 280, but his successor required over 400.

Clearly, servants were a symbol of status and power, and not only among the ruling class. A Florentine census of 1551 found that 45% of all households employed at least one servant and 25% paid two or more to carry out tasks that



Northern Italian painter Girolamo Marchesi (ca. 1471–1550) captured this *Young Woman at Her Toilet with Her Servant* (ca. 1500). Whether a young socialite or a courtesan, the woman would have had a female servant to help with dress, hair, and makeup. The subject is the woman, and her servant is portrayed with a peasant's tanned skin and simple clothing that contrasts with her mistress's ivory skin and fancy dress. (Peter Horree/Alamy Stock Photo)

were either too disagreeable or too difficult for other members to do. One out of six enumerated Florentines was a servant, and that did not count slaves and probably many child-servants. In the 1390s, the wealthy merchant-class Datini husband and wife employed three female and two male servants, as well as five slaves in nearby Prato. In the Veneto, the sixteenth-century Moro family, a group (*fraterna*) of 17 including brothers, their wives, and children, employed 24 servants, while Count Muzio Gambara's family of three paid 29. The 1563 Venetian census counted 7,597 nobles who employed 7,573 servants, of whom 62% were female, a ratio of one servant per noble. Among citizens of the next class, 13,604 employed only 5,335. The 12,908 servants, all of whom should have been registered with the

state, constituted 7.65% of the Venetian population of 168,627, less than half the Florentine percentage of 16.7% a decade earlier. In Verona, 7% of the population consisted of servants in 1425, but 12.3% in 1502.

Servants came in all ages and both sexes. Otherwise-abandoned children eight years old and older, especially girls, were taken in as charity and put to work doing simple and increasingly difficult tasks. While boys were more often apprenticed to guild master craftsmen, domestic service was considered a type of apprenticeship for future wives and mothers. Elderly widows with few other choices often entered or re-entered the workforce as cooks, maids, laundresses, or governesses, while lactating young mothers were hired as wet nurses. Older boys and men performed heavy-lifting and strenuous tasks unsuited to women or girls. They might provide an entourage for their masters during the day and carry torches and swords to protect them at night. Males might be trusted to deliver goods and messages; make collections; and exercise skills such as gardening, carpentry, or gondoliering. Talented servants in noble or patrician households might sing, dance, play an instrument, or act in theatrical performances.

When hosting a banquet, a family might use or hire the labor of up to two dozen employees. The *scalco* or manager orchestrated everything from the menu to disposing of garbage. The chef ran the kitchen, its crew, and equipment, and food from market to plate. Noble boys served the tables as pages, and apprenticed boys toiled in the kitchen. Specialists included the wine steward, chef of cold foods, carving masters, and the master's cupbearer. Also on display were in-house or hired musicians. Middle-class families might employ a cook, scullery maid, and maid's assistant to tend the fires, all of whom were female.

Most servants lived where they worked, though quarters were often squalid, being located in basements or attics. Roman servants might reside in inns, taverns, or boarding houses run by widows. Turnover was frequent, especially among unskilled servants who had to be retaught duties by each new employer. In fifteenth-century Florence, an average of 60% of female servants left after less than a year. The better-prepared servants came from families of servants, though most hailed from the countryside—especially after plagues—or were emigrants from abroad or other parts of Italy. Married servants were often preferred due to assumptions that they would be more stable and dependable than unmarried ones of either sex. If a servant married while in service, his or her position might even be raised for the same reason. Studies of wills show that servants sometimes left legacies to fellow servants, and more often masters left money or special items to loyal, long-term help. This may have been considered in part “good alms” or charity, since some household manuals suggest that servants should pray for their masters and servants might have been considered among the poor.

Servant's Handbells

Both visible and audible, the handbell was used to summon a servant or servants of a wealthy or high-status householder. It was both useful and served as a symbol of authority and power in the household. Examples appear today in museums and in painted portraits, often featuring cast or sculpted decorations, including the family name or crest, domestic mottoes, or Classical scenes. To be “rung for” may seem impersonal or even slavish, but modern doorbells and ringtones serve the same purpose by the same means. Imagine arriving at a party and shouting until the host answered the door.

Court records reveal a seamier side to relations. Servants drank, gambled, and committed crimes, shaming their masters. Servants lied to, stole from, defrauded, defamed, insulted, assaulted, seduced, and even killed members of masters' families. Older male servants raped younger male and female servants, for which in some jurisdictions they had to marry the girls. For their part, family members abused servants. They broke contracts, sexually abused males and females, beat, swindled, and falsely accused them of misconduct or crime.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work*: Apprentices; Slaves and Slavery; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Education of Children; Families, Noble and Patrician; Fostering, Step Children, and Adoption; Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing; Old Age; *Fashion and Appearance*: Livery; Social Status and Clothing; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; *Politics and Warfare*: Crime and Punishments; *Primary Document*: Early Fifteenth-Century Households, Housewives, and Servants: Francesco Barbaro. “On Running the Venetian Patrician Household.” *On Wifely Duties* (1416)

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SIBLINGS

Brothers and sisters took many forms in Renaissance-era Italy. Some had been born of the same parents and were close together in age. Half-siblings had different mothers and were scattered in ages. Because widowers often remarried, siblings could have been even decades apart in age. Then there were foster siblings, adopted siblings, and step-siblings from blended families, as when a widower with children married a widow who had custody of her children. Marriage introduced brothers and sisters-in-law, who were not really siblings, but might come to resemble them because of age or inclination. The usual rules in this patriarchal world were that while alive the male head of the household held the group together; the eldest legitimate son inherited his father's position in the family (with exceptions for mental deficiency, disgrace, or moral issues); all relatives on the male side had precedence over any relatives on the female side of the family; and young women who married or entered a convent effectively left the family. But these rules were not always followed, and often even legal regulations were ignored for the benefit of family members.

Siblings spent some of their youth, but usually not all, in the same home. Among upper classes, infants were often sent out to wet nurses, where they remained until weaned. They returned to a family whose older boys may have been sent out as apprentices, to a distant boarding school, or to be fostered at the household of a social better who needed companions for his own son. Among working classes, girls might disappear into other homes as servants even before age ten. For rural girls and young women this often meant moving into the nearest town or city to work until they had accumulated enough for a dowry. This could place them in precarious circumstances as they lost what should have been the protection by father and older brothers from molestation. The natural male inclination to be protective of one's sister is in evidence in court documents regarding abusive husbands. If they lived near, the abused woman's birth brothers were often the first to respond; and their responses were often not merely verbal in nature. Brothers, too, might offer to shelter their abused sibling during a cooling-off period.

Like other relationships, those of brothers ran the gamut from love and respect to rage and murder. Resentments harked back to differences in parental treatment during childhood, and to opportunities received while maturing. The growing application of primogeniture in inheritance practice meant that a single brother, usually but not always the oldest, controlled the patrimony and usually business interests. Younger brothers worked for the oldest or set out on their own. In Venice the practice of establishing *fraterne* (*frater* = brother) developed. A *fraterna* consisted of one married man and his unmarried brothers who occupied the large

family home. The brothers remained unmarried, in a sense sacrificing themselves for the economic good of the family. This arrangement ensured that the patrimony would remain in one blood line and not be divided among several. Similarly in Venice, wealthy families faced rapidly increasing dowry amounts as girls' families competed for the most eligible men—already reduced in number by the *fraterna* system. The norm emerged that one sister would receive the dowry and husband, and any remaining lived with their parents or joined nunneries. Here, where the women were referred to as “sister,” the term took literal meaning as siblings tended to congregate in the same religious house, often with older relatives.

One role of noble or patrician married women was to create linkages or alliances between families. As the common member of both her birth family and that into which she married, the wife was the linchpin between the two. Whether or not the families' two leaders were of her generation, she was often in a position to channel influence from one to the other, especially through her own brothers and husband, though some brides quickly became isolated as members of their new families. Even when great distances separated siblings, ties could remain tight and functional. Letters, as from the Spinelli family women studied by Moran, communicated the desires and thanks for favors, interventions, influence, and other interactions between blood brothers and sisters. Even when a married woman lived near her brothers, her husband's absence due to business, pilgrimage, official duties, imprisonment, or exile might require her to rely on their direct aid and support.

Women who were forced or chose to abandon their husbands and return, with or without children in tow, to their birth homes were at the mercy of their fathers, but also the good graces of their brothers. Once it had dowered a daughter, a birth family had no financial obligation to her, and this could even mean housing her and any children, for however short a period. If her dowry was not readily returned, or was held up in litigation, then her remarriage was likewise held up unless the family re-dowered her. This cut into the patrimony, and would reduce the shares each male was to inherit. If her father had died, then she really had no one on whom to rely for a second or additional dowry. If she had no children, or the deceased father's family took them in, then there was always the sisterhood, nunnery that is.

See also: *Arts:* Portraits; *Family and Gender:* Childhood; Dowries; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Fostering, Step Children, and Adoption; Inheritance; *Housing and Community:* Palazzi; Neighborhood and Parish; Villages and Village Life

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Sodomy. See Homosexuality and Sodomy

VIRTÙ AND HONOR

Several concepts shaped the public or social identity of the Renaissance-era Italian. Whether duke or peasant, one’s social self was of tremendous importance, and to assault or undermine that self was a very serious matter.

Virtù derived from the Latin *virtus*, which meant “excellence,” and ultimately from *vir*, which meant a “man.” For the Italian, *virtù* essentially meant the ability of one to get the job done well. This entailed skill, knowledge, good judgment, persistence, and other personal traits that the culture believed any worthwhile adult male should possess. It was a masculine virtue, most famously discussed in Niccolò Machiavelli’s *The Prince*. But there was also a moral element: the man of *virtù* was a man of his word; he could be trusted and relied upon. Though an inner quality, one’s *virtù* was manifested in one’s actions. If cultivated, this ability grew and developed as a man’s familial and social responsibilities multiplied. The man who could not accomplish what he set out or needed to do was seen as not only lacking *virtù* but also as being weak and ultimately without honor.

Honor was a major component of one’s social identity, whether a man or woman. Inwardly it was the satisfaction of knowing that one was respected, and outwardly it was the display of behaviors to which one’s social peers and betters responded positively. Honor meant different things to different classes, though even peasants had a sense of social worth that reflected their personal value to themselves and their communities.

The relationship of honor to social class was a complex one. Both notions stemmed from the early medieval aristocracy of fighting men. Their warrior ethic as expressed in song and story set certain class expectations: bravery, strength, loyalty, and generosity among men and really the same among the women, though to be fulfilled exclusively in the home or hall. The poet, peasant, or merchant was almost expected to be cowardly, weak, vacillating, and greedy. By the Renaissance



An early expert on *virtù*, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) was a classical scholar, political theorist, and Florentine historian and politician. In *The Prince*, written as a kind of résumé to get the attention of the new Florentine ruler Lorenzo de' Medici (1513; first printed 1532), he emphasized the ruler's ability to accomplish his goals by whatever means rather than traditional Christian moral virtues, as necessary to effective rulership. (Library of Congress)

era, warrior values were tamed by chivalry, Christianity, and urban life, as well as by the noble courts. The concept of honor trickled down the social ladder, though expectations of the nobleman were quite different from those of the peasant. Each, however, took his honor very seriously. The higher on the social ladder one was, the bigger the social stage on which one's honor was scrutinized. The honor of the nobleman or politician was bound up with matters on a civic or even territorial level. *Virtù* was essential for the ruler, general, or chancellor, if only because their success—or failure—affected so many. Down the ladder honor was also a key to social success, if only on a smaller stage. The man of unsullied honor could be trusted to borrow and return money or other goods, to pay a promised dowry, to treat another's daughter well as a wife, to

support a patron, to pay his taxes, to treat customers fairly, to be an honest politician, and to give accurate testimony. The man of honor was a good son, family man, neighbor, citizen, and Christian. Many comedies relied on low-class characters displaying honor while their betters shamed themselves.

For women, honor was closely linked to their sexuality. An as-yet unmarried woman's virginity lay at its center, and anything that called that into question, whether her actions or her reputation, sullied her honor and that of her family as well. A girl's tarnished honor could result in a disadvantageous marriage or permanent residence in a nunnery. The married woman's honor was bound up with her fidelity to her husband and family, and her service to both. A married woman's infidelity directly assaulted her husband's *virtù*, as it displayed his inability to control his household. A daughter's sexual or social misbehavior did the same. Public modesty was thought to mirror inner morality.

Because honor was acquired, it could be lost. The cuckolded husband had no honor, nor did the prostitute or unchaste widow. If a woman assaulted her husband in public, both lost face, as neither was following assumed gender roles. Rumors ate away at honor and if exposed had to be proven false. In turn, declaring another a liar, even with a simple “You lie!” constituted a major attack that itself called for a challenge. To fail to respond to a blow against one’s honor was tacitly to admit not only its truth but also one’s weakness. Responses took various forms, some more acceptable than others. They had to be public, as did the provoking incident, or honor was not served. Shouted counter-charges or public counter-rumors could redress the imbalance, though these often ratcheted up the process. Following an insult with a physical attack was generally illegal, but if the insult was damaging enough, the penalty could be a fair price to pay. Suing another in court for defamation was a remedy, but the insult or action might be vindicated instead. Vendetta was a very serious reaction, though private vengeance was highly problematic as it could easily result in violent cycles of feuding.

Leonbattista Alberti on Familial Honor, c. 1440

“[Honor is] the most important thing in anyone’s life. It is one thing without which no enterprise deserves praise or has real value. It is the ultimate source of all the splendor our work may have, the most beautiful and shining part of our life now and our life hereafter, the most lasting and eternal part—I speak of honor. . . . Satisfying the standards of honor we shall grow rich and well praised, admired and esteemed among men. The man who scorns to hear or obey that sense of honor which seeks to advise and command him grows full of vice and will never be contented even if he is rich. Men will neither admire nor love him.”

Source: Alberti, Leonbattista. *The Family in Renaissance Florence*. Translated by Renée Neu Watkins. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1969, pp. 149–50.

The Italian practice of dueling with swords originated in sixteenth-century Naples among military men. It was a private rather than public response to a slight, but that suited the officer or aristocrat who believed honor came with social position. Success depended on one’s skill at fencing, a new sport that had spawned books, rules, and the rapier. Venice prohibited dueling in 1534 and 1541 as did the Council of Trent.

See also: *Family and Gender*: Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; *Housing and Community*: Patronage; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Noble Pursuits; Sports, Contests, and Competitions

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Wedding. *See* **Espousal and Wedding**

Wetnursing. *See* **Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing**

WIDOWS

In 1427, 25% of adult women in Florence were widows. When a woman's husband died, she entered a new phase of life. Whatever her class, she faced immediate tasks and longer-range decisions that would reshape her life. Some matters were in her hands, but other parties could open or close doors. A widow could be 18 or 58; be childless, have small children or grown children; live near her birth family or far away; and have unfettered access or no access to her dowry. She could be well-off or saddled with her husband's debts. He may have had a detailed will leaving little to her judgment, or died suddenly and young leaving much to her discretion.

Tending dead bodies was, by custom, women's work, and in lower-class households the widow played a direct role in the funerary rituals. She purchased, borrowed, or rented a suitable black mourning dress and adopted an appropriately mournful demeanor, whatever her actual emotions. If local laws allowed, she

openly wailed at the funeral, supported by her close female family members and friends. She might have to deal with family debts and bills, and with his business affairs if he had not made other arrangements. If he had a will and named her an executor, then she had to work with other executors in carrying out his last wishes, including arranging for his memorialization. She might also help carry out the probate inventory of everything he owned that would be considered part of his estate. If they had young children, this task was especially important as this would be a large portion of their patrimony.

Her next steps were also largely directed by others. If the couple was well-off, and he made appropriate arrangements, as long as she remained in good repute and did not remarry, she would continue living in their home or she would inherit an appropriate residence. If she had older, independent children, she might be invited to live with one of their families. If she had younger children, issues became complicated. Though they were her offspring as well as his, they bore his name and were part of his birth family and not hers. His family might take them all in. Her family might take her in, reabsorbing the dowry they had provided her in return for a new home. His family, then, could seek to adopt the children, a move that might suit her well. If all of these doors were closed and she had young children, and if it was the sixteenth century, she might abandon them to a foundling home or take them with her to a home for widows such as Florence's Orbatello.

Overshadowing all was her right of access to her dowry (*vadimonium*). If her husband had received it all, had kept it liquid, and specified in his will that she should receive it, then all was well. If her family had not provided all of it, it was tied up in his business, loans, or his birth family's affairs, or he had squandered or spent it, then it might take years to sort out or end up leaving her with nothing.

Custom dictated at least a year's mourning, a period during which most outstanding obligations were able to be met. In Tuscany the average was two years. Many men's wills stipulated that if his widow remarried she would forfeit anything she received through the will apart from her dowry. If she remarried, her late husband's birth family had firm claims to his young children, if they wished to press them, though courts often left children younger than three with their mothers. Of course, remarriage required a dowry for most women, something she could provide if she had recovered hers. If she had rejoined her birth family and recovered her dowry, she came under intense pressure to remarry, serving the family's purposes in creating a new alliance. This was especially true if she was still reasonably young.

Her family might also direct her to a nunnery, if she was childless, or she might make that choice on her own. Sometimes older widows pooled their resources and created a small community dedicated to religious or charitable activities. Destitute

women might find shelter in new charitable asylums for battered or widowed women or ex-prostitutes. These usually arranged eventually to have male children apprenticed and girls enter trusted households as servants. In Venice, care of widows was vested in parishes; 61% of widows maintained their own households. Some widows were driven to become prostitutes or concubines because of their poverty; others became household or institutional servants; some exercised their skills as weavers or in other fields to support themselves, worked as midwives, or continued their late husband's business. If she had a house, a widow might take in boarders and sell garden produce. Many were reduced to begging. Wealthy widows saw to their children's success and served as benefactresses and patrons. Freed from marital obligations, some became noted in intellectual or cultural circles for their own accomplishments and support for other women. Sixteenth-century Neapolitan widow and poet Laura Terracina wrote the haunting "On All the Widowed Ladies of This Our City of Naples."

See also: *Arts*: Women and the Arts; *Economics and Work*: Putting-Out System; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Death, Funerals, and Burial; Dowries; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Fostering, Step Children, and Adoption; Old Age; Servants, Household; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; *Religion and Beliefs*: Nuns and Nunneries; Witches and Sorcerers; *Science and Technology*: Academies

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WIVES AND HUSBANDS

Renaissance-era Italian society was patriarchal at its core. Consequently marriage was a patriarchal institution. The bride joined the groom's family, and her children became his family's next generation. Aside from wealthy widows and courtesans, unattached women were generally supplied with few resources. In part for this reason, society disdained but accepted cohabitation, even as a priest's concubine. At least she received food, shelter, clothing, and avoided begging and, hopefully, abuse. Given the social norms, the wife was fortunate to have been chosen, and whatever sort of emotional ties bound the couple, she owed her husband gratitude, respect, and obedience. Love was considered a poor basis for a marriage, though couples were expected to grow together over the years.

Though patterns differed across regions and time, husbands tended to be older than their mates by several years. Men were the public face of the family, though women had their own tight circles of neighbors, families, and friends. Husbands had legal authority beyond that of their wives. They generally earned all or most of the family's income, served in the civic militia, joined religious confraternities, were eligible for public political or bureaucratic service, owed family taxes and rent, and gained or lost personal honor according to their family's behavior. The husband's was the face known at the city hall, guild hall, tavern, book stall, work site, barber shop, cloth shop, and in the streets and *piazze*.

Lower-status wives circulated among friends' houses, neighborhood shops, the food market, and church, but her home was her domain. Even with a servant, she was responsible for food supplies, cooking, cleaning, laundry, sewing, tending the sick, and childcare. She was often pregnant or nursing, and was increasingly likely to be literate. In 1597, Giuseppe Falcone published *A Work of Agriculture*, in which he outlined the duties of country wives of all classes. He gave plenty of advice on matters from tending chickens, the house garden, and laborers, to making cheese and other edibles an urban wife would buy. In the country, both husbands and wives worked hard, often side-by-side in fields, orchards, or with flocks. Here, because the commercial economy was far less developed, her contributions to the very survival of the couple and their family were vital. Among these were often wages from completing put-out textile work or needle work, or wet-nursing the babies of upper-class urban families. And, of course, she was expected to meet her husband's sexual needs. Her husband was to rule his wife and family, employing corporal punishment as he deemed necessary. He was to supply and oversee the family's resources, financial and otherwise: appropriate shelter, clothing, tools, and furnishings. He was also to see that if his wife's dowry was used for family business it was reconstituted in the event she left or he died. He should love his wife, and respect her, especially in public.

Among the upper classes the *casa* walls were somewhat thicker and married women less likely to appear unescorted in public. Wives were far less likely to participate in their husbands' work, though they could prove useful. A description of Caterina Sforza, whose husband ruled Forlì, simplified her duties: bear children annually, manage the household, advance her husband's career, and serve as a diplomat between their families. Ruling wives sometimes filled their husbands' shoes in their husbands' absence on business, political service, war, or exile, or following their deaths.

Elite households usually employed numerous servants, which allowed the wife to remain pregnant much of the time. In many ways, and perhaps for many high-status men, this was his wife's only real purpose. Even sexual companionship for its sake came readily from a mistress, servant, or courtesan. Outwardly man and wife appeared as one, while levels of true affection are harder to discern. Divorce was never an option, and separation could be hidden or a matter of public shame. A study of wills demonstrates that over the fifteenth century Venetian men increased their trust in and affection for their wives. Chojnacki found this expressed in affectionate language, clear provisions for return of her dowry, and his choice of her as his executor or sole heir. Then there was the 1523 Bergamasque inventory that began "The first possession is my wife."

See also: *Arts*: Novella; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Slaves and Slavery; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Divorce, Separation, and Annulment; Espousal and Wedding; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Inheritance; Widows; *Fashion and Appearance*: Sumptuary Laws; *Housing and Community*: Furnishing the House; Jewish Communities; Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare*: Citizenship; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Weddings; Women, Letters, and Letter Writing

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FASHION AND APPEARANCE



INTRODUCTION

An old and trite saying claimed that clothes make the man. Much truer for the Renaissance era was that one's appearance spoke for the person. Appearance had a language that was commonly accepted within Italy. Today, a pair of jeans, T-shirt, and a scruffy beard might indicate a penniless college student or be the style of a billionaire tech mogul. No one in the fifteenth century would mistake a broke student for a wealthy banker, unless the banker was "slumming it" for Carnival. That time of reversal each year reinforced society's norms by turning them upside down, as if releasing pressure. The norms surrounding appearance were bound up with appropriateness, respect, and ultimately honor. To dress below one's station in life or to adopt the garb of a soldier or a monk or a prostitute was inappropriate, a sign of disrespect of oneself and the group whose garments were being appropriated, and brought dishonor on oneself.

The monk, the soldier, and the prostitute donned clothing that identified them as members of their groups. So did the livery worn by members of a noble's household, the widow's veil and dark clothing, and rough breeches, short tunic, and sturdy boots of the peasant or construction worker. In a religious procession, the orders of monks and mendicants were grouped, and each was identifiable by their robes and hoods. Civic officials had their versions of ceremonial uniforms, with the highest sometimes marked by special colors or fur. Honor was due the office if not the officer. Sumptuary laws abounded during the Renaissance era to ensure that civic officials alone wore the clothing that spoke of their status. Sumptuary laws also regulated the wearing of very expensive fabrics or accessories, and of extravagant styles of clothing. To dress higher than one's status in society was no more appropriate than to dress down. Sex workers had to be distinguishable from "honest"



A Young Lady of Fashion (1462–1465), a profile portrait typical of the mid-quattrocento, is attributed to Paolo Uccello (1397–1475). Dressed simply in a gold pomegranate on red brocade with a blue overdress, her choker and pendant speak of wealth. Most striking is her golden hair and silk cap studded with pearls and pearl brooch. Hair emerges at several points, and is veiled only by semi-transparent silk organza. Oil on panel. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

women, unmarried women from new brides, Jews from Christians, and the really wealthy from the not so wealthy.

Some regulations stemmed, as in Venice, from an official bias against unreasonably high expenditures for “decorating” women with brocades, furs, gems, and jewelry. Owning such items was not really the issue: wearing them in public was, for these were actually forms of wealth in the Italian economy. Much of a woman’s dowry was in the form of her trousseau: cloth, clothing, and wearable gems and precious metals. We hear of Queen Isabella of Castile pawning her jewels to outfit Columbus’s expedition, in fact, there was nothing unusual in that. Families from nobility to peasantry used their valuables as collateral for emergencies or as annual bridge loans until crops came in. There was a thriving market in secondhand clothing, as in much else, if it came to selling instead of pawning. This also meant that middle-class women could purchase used high-end

garments at discount prices, hence the need to avoid status confusion by banning the wearing of these in public by “inappropriate” women. Courtesans and prostitutes, too, were banned from wearing certain expensive clothing or accessories in public, even if they could afford it.

The great concern for appearance was also due in part to the material wealth of the peninsula. Apart from indigent hill folk and those living at the margins of society, people had unprecedented and unequalled access to goods that shaped their appearances. Fabrics flowed in from northwestern Europe, North Africa, and the Near East;

Italian looms produced silks that vied with Chinese wares for quality; and Italian producers set the mark for the highest-quality woolen goods as well as more utilitarian linens and cottons. One mark of this embarrassment of riches was the male and female undergarment known as the *camicia*. Essentially a long, absorbent, and washable long-sleeved undershirt or shift, it was the principal means of maintaining bodily cleanliness. Changing it was the equivalent of showering. Even on working men bits of it showed at the neck and cuffs, or it alone was worn with breeches. If this item was soiled and dirty, so was the body beneath it, and so was the wearer's honor. And so it was changed daily and laundered frequently. Pilgrims to the Holy Land were told to pack enough *camicie* so they could wear a fresh one each day of the three-week trip. How many did even the peasant farmer have and wear thin?

But appearance was not just about clothing. Hairstyles came and went for men and women, but the golden tresses of the poet Petrarch's beloved Laura remained the goal of many women throughout the era. Do-it-yourself Books of Secrets provided organic or chemical bleaches and dyes for dark, Mediterranean hair. Makers of wide-brimmed straw hats left the crowns off of some and sold them to women who wanted to let the sun—and chemicals—do the job. But pale skin went with pale hair, and products with horrible compounds appeared on women's toilette shelves and faces. Teeth, too, were to be pale and clean, so ground coral and other abrasives were rubbed on them. When an unfriendly fist, too much sugar, or mercury treatments for syphilis made teeth fall out, new ones might be carved from walrus tusk and set in with gold wire. For most, the hole simply remained and others joined it.

When Pope Clement VII began growing a beard to protest the Sack of Rome in 1527, he started a fad that lasted the century. Trends in facial fur fashion ran from the full and long bush to the goatee, as recorded in sixteenth-century paintings. Head hair, too, ran long and short. Portraits of Lorenzo de' Medici, Il Magnifico, show typical fifteenth-century shoulder-length locks. Half a century later men's hair was cut short, as in the Medici grand dukes' portraits. Longer hair may have been a mark of the upper classes, and of youth more than maturity. Short hair may have reflected military styles of the soldiers who flooded northern and central Italy, or Classical Roman portraits on ancient statues and coins. Or it may just have been easier to pick out the ubiquitous head lice. Explaining fashion can be a tricky thing.

ART, FASHION IN

The study of fashion of the Renaissance era presents some real challenges. The principal sources are documents such as inventories, letters, and accounts; surviving pieces of clothing; and pictorial evidence in images in many media. The value

of documents is that they provide facts and figures and vocabulary. The problem with vocabulary is matching the terms for garments or their features to surviving or depicted clothing. The problem with pictures is always knowing what to call what one is seeing. Many items are readily identifiable and easily labeled, while others are more ambiguous. Additional difficulty stems from regional variations in names for garments, and changes in names over time. Luckily, the responsible artist sought to achieve realism in his treatment of people and their clothing, so modern viewers can usually rely on the accuracy of portrayal.

By the fourteenth century, Italians had begun to embrace the idea that clothing was a second skin and not merely a curtain draped around the body. In fact, some scholars contend that “fashion” was invented during the early Renaissance by wealthy elites. In 1427, Florentine tax rolls listed 866 clothiers and 909 makers of hats and other headgear. The typical patrician at that time spent 40% of his income on clothing for his family. Being appropriately fashionable was of great concern to at least the upper classes across the peninsula. To dress appropriately and well was a matter of pride and even of honor. This role of clothing continued through the period for both men and women.

The role of art in reinforcing these values was central. For the most part, members of the upper classes also commissioned art. Portraits present the cardinals, dukes, bankers, rich merchants, and celebrities of the era and their wives and children. These people stare out at or more typically past, viewers clad in carefully selected ensembles of clothing and accessories. These items spoke directly to the Renaissance-era viewers just as they spoke to the actual wearers and the people they met in streets and halls. Today, the hipster, goth, hip hop fan, Marine, and fast-food worker are easily discernable to Americans because we live within the culture that gives meaning to the distinctive clothes they wear. In the same way, Renaissance-era culture provided meaning to the depth of a neckline; the whiteness of an undershirt cuff; or the appearance of pearls, loose hair, or a sword. Learning the visual vocabulary helps us to meet the people of the past on their own terms.

Italians in contemporary clothing also appear in many other art subject types. Commemorations of significant recent events, scenes from the lives or miracles of near-contemporary saints, and images of individual or group patrons worshipping the Christ Child in His mother’s arms provide important visual evidence. Venetian artists painted views of processions and other civic celebrations that recorded the city’s civic and religious groups dressed in their ritual or official finery. Onlookers and bystanders in their Sunday best create a fore- and background against which the serpentine parades proceed. Predellas are small pictures surrounding or beneath saints’ portraits or some altarpieces. They often include finely wrought miniature scenes of everyday life and people at their daily routines and in their everyday wardrobes. Worshippers may be dressed in their somber best, or they may be a

specific confraternal group clad in anonymity-ensuring hooded robes and grasping their short whips with which they did penance. Until the later sixteenth century, Italian artists, unlike the Dutch, did not revel in daily life nor deem it worth more than visual footnotes to more honorable subjects. Peasants toiling, nannies tending children, servants hanging laundry, construction or dock workers straining, beggars, charlatans, and girls selling trinkets appear often, and in the clothing appropriate to them, but almost always in the background.

Female saints often exemplified the period's fashionable woman. The culture assumed that Jesus probably did not wear doublet and hose, but it had no problem with dressing the Virgin Mary and her holy sisters in the day's finest. Female saints

embodied the same moral values that contemporary women were expected to embrace and artists to reflect. Many of these saints were from the upper classes, so it was fitting to drape their figures in the finest brocades, velvets, satins, furs, and other materials. Italy had few queens to honor, so Mary on her throne was regaled, layered in clearly articulated garments constructed of exquisite fabrics. Male saints who were bishops, cardinals, or popes were outfitted in their ceremonial vestments, complete with characteristic miters, gloves, rings, and crozier. Of course, these were direct reflections of the Church leaders of the era clad in shimmering satin or shining cloth of gold.

Because of the importance of the second skin, artists lavished attention on main characters' clothing, and often they mastered even the very tactile nature of its fabrics. Early Sienese painters often featured plaid fabrics, as this was a local specialty. By the sixteenth century artists across Italy could capture the play of light across fine velvets, or the cool smooth flow of long fur, or the crisp rigor of a clean, white



This *Portrait of an Unknown Woman* (ca. 1490) is by Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), one of the era's premier artists, while he was in Milan. The silk ribbons at the shoulders indicate detachable sleeves, a feature that makes the dress very flexible. Oil on panel. (Art Media/Print Collector/Getty Images)

starched linen collar, whatever they called the garments. The art of the cloth-makers and tailors had been matched by that of the artists recording their work.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Courtly; Art, Sacred; Daily Life in Art; Non-Europeans in Art; Portraits; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Family and Gender*: Birth and Midwives; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Children; Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Court, Fashion at; Fabrics, Domestic; Fabrics, Imported; Facial Hair; Gems and Jewelry; Headgear; Livery; Religious Habits and Vestments; Shoes and Footwear; *Politics and Warfare*: Arms and Armor; Civic Magistracies and Offices; Soldiers; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Civic Festivals; Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Weddings

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ATTIRE, CHILDREN

Whether boys or girls, youngsters portrayed in period paintings usually appear as little adults dressed in miniature. When children’s garments are mentioned in documents, they are similarly diminutives of adult clothing denoted by the word ending *-etta*, or *-ina*. Wardrobes changed and expanded as children matured, and the wealthy could afford a wider range of garments at any age than laborer or peasant families. For those children relegated to institutions, there were no options to the house uniform.

Babies from birth wore swaddling bands that wrapped around the body and essentially immobilized it. A diaper collected waste, but both of these needed to be laundered rather frequently whatever the child’s class. In colder weather, a cloak or a blanket provided needed warmth. At about the time a child was weaned, he or she was provided a loosely fitting version of an adult undergarment, *camicia*, or gown. The bare buttocks of artists’ playful putti or Baby Jesus or young St. John suggest a lack of any undergarment, though continued use of a diaper was likely until the child could control himself or herself. At least some upper-class families who sent children away to wet nurses assembled a lavish Welcome Home wardrobe.

Dominican friar Giovanni Dominici moralized against the practice of providing infants elaborate and expensive embroidered caps, silvered capes, fancy gowns, colored little shoes, and fine stockings. Children should not be spoiled, and should thus receive simple, plainly colored clothing. Older children who sported extravagant attire also drew fire, though it was aimed at doting parents. Civic sumptuary laws sometimes targeted children's clothes that featured cloth of gold or silk ribbons, or that were multicolored. Some warned that wearing gems or jewelry could attract muggers and put a child at risk. Franciscan preacher San Bernardino in the 1420s and 1430s thundered against boys dressed effeminately or provocatively by parents. He saw braided hair, see-through *camicie*, doublets that rode high over the navel, and hose open at the sides as attractions for males seeking to sodomize the boys, a widely held concern in fifteenth-century Florence.

Once toilet-trained, boys donned short breeches and shoes appropriate to the environment. Depending on age and circumstance, a boy might wear over his breeches a *camicia*, short tunic, or vest-like doublet. When old enough for hose, usually a matter of local custom, a doublet was needed as an anchor to which to attach the top of the hose. The front of the hose might be sewn or laced shut, or capped with a codpiece, made more prominent as he became older and more sexualized. A belted tunic might cover the doublet and top of the hose, and a cap in coordinated color(s) his head. At night or in colder climes a cloak, perhaps lined with satin or fur, would cover all, even the head if the cloak had a hood. Colors of these ensembles might reflect no more than the boy's own preference or indicate an affiliation with a neighborhood, confraternity, nobleman, or guild master, essentially becoming livery.

Whatever their class, girls were considered more vulnerable to danger in public than boys. Just as their mothers did not live in the streets and shops as their men did, girls tended to be anchored to the home. They graduated from an infant's gown or *camicia*, to larger and larger versions of the same. Considered an undergarment, the *camicia* could be worn by itself in private or around other girls or women. In colder weather or a more public setting it would be covered with a gown, with or without a bodice. In a formal setting, like her mother she would also wear an overgown of fine material, perhaps with detachable sleeves fashionable for the period. As they approached puberty, girls were kept closer to the hearth, but when they appeared in public for festivals, weddings, or other occasions, parents made sure that they put on a good show. Dress had to obey sumptuary laws regarding fabrics, furs, colors, and accessories, but had to be ostentatious enough to stand out in a crowd. Brocades, velvets, and silks, pearls in the hair, a low neckline, embroidery and lacework—preferably her own—and glimpses of very clean, white *camicia* at the neck and wrists became a kind of upper-class uniform for young, unmarried women. There needed to be a hint of sexuality, but more important were modesty

and good taste. A mother or a 25-year-old man eying a 12-year-old girl were looking at the same thing: a wife in progress. When Cesare Vecellio compiled his visual catalogue of world costume, published in 1593, he included only a very few images of young people. Unique was the “maiden of Torino,” in northwestern Italy. Like others of her stage of life her long hair flowed loose but her face was covered with a dark veil with slits for her eyes, nose, and mouth.

Children who were abandoned, orphaned, or otherwise found their ways to charitable institutions such as foundling homes or orphanages went through similar stages from swaddling bands to adult clothing. Fashion, however, was never a concern, and the cloth used for gowns, *camicie*, tunics, and breeches was a thin, coarse but sturdy linen or cotton, sometimes mixed with goat’s hair, in Florence known as *guarnello*. Most girls in institutions were expected to attract husbands and marry. Some enterprising administrators arranged religious processions on meaningful feast days, when the girls of marriageable age were especially smartly dressed and local men knew to view that years’ promising brides-to-be.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Cloth Trade; Clothmaking; *Family and Gender*: Espousal and Wedding; Homosexuality and Sodomy; *Fashion and Appearance*: Court, Fashion at; Fabrics, Domestic; Fabrics, Imported; Headgear; Shoes and Footwear; Social Status and Clothing; Sumptuary Laws; Underclothing; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival

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ATTIRE, FEMALE

The basic women’s ensemble consisted of an undergarment—the knee or ankle-length white *camicia*—and one or two layered gowns of appropriate richness. Fabric-covered shoes were slipped over silk stockings, a cape or cloak over

the whole, and hair and hat, if one, worked together on top. Typical accessories included a stole over the neck and shoulders; gloves of soft leather, silk, linen, or even fish skin; sashes, handkerchiefs, a fan; a belt of silk and gold or silver; and a silk purse hung from a belt. By herself at home or with only other women, a fancily embroidered or lace-trimmed shift-like *camicia* would suffice, or a slight variation called the *schiafonetto* after its supposed Dalmatian origins. Anywhere less intimate she would wear a *camicia* and some garments over it.

Throughout the Renaissance era, women wore a sleeved top and skirt, and only courtesans donned pants. Rather than two pieces, these were usually either joined as a bodice and skirt or fell directly from the shoulders and neckline to the ankles, cinched with a low belt. The inner gown could be somewhat tight-fitting and covered the *camicia* almost completely. The outer one could be more voluminous, even sleeveless or open at the front.

Fashion was literally in the details. The regions of the garments that could be altered or replaced included the collar, neckline, sleeves, cuffs, and hemline. Since the *camicia* was expected to be clean and spotlessly white, and was often trimmed with lace or embroidery, it could be exposed at the collar, neckline, and cuffs. Slashes or holes in the sleeves of outer garments also allowed the underlying sleeve material to show through. As the only white garment it is easily seen in many women's portraits. By the later sixteenth century, this habit had developed into very elaborate false collars and the ruff or ruffle, familiar to us from Elizabethan-era paintings.

Necklines moved like elevators. For courtesans and prostitutes they were billboards, and the lower the better; for a recent widow or nun a high neckline was essential. Florentine law set a depth limit in 1464. Women at court notoriously wore plunging necklines. With garments and accessories, layering the neckline could present a complex picture of three types of cloth and decorative embroidery, lace, lacing, and a pendant or necklace.

Sleeves were always removable and often easily detachable. They could be of very different fabric from the dress to which they were attached. They could be extremely large and voluminous and cinched at the cuff, or not. They could be tightly fitted or pleated or slashed to reveal underlying fabric, or decorated with embroidery, lace, ribbons, or a row of buttons. They might be cut lengthwise and loosely laced back together to expose fabric beneath. Sixteenth-century Florentines had 14 words for distinctive sleeve types. A cuff could be no more than the end of a sleeve, or a florid display space. As for hems, some women did wear skirt hoops, which meant the fabric fell in a circle at a distance from their feet. The main question for the fashionable and the critics was whether to have a train and how long it should/could be.

Attire for Pregnancy and Labor?

Florentine household inventories contain clothing articles designated *da parto*, for childbirth. Nothing otherwise distinguishes these from other shirts, tunics, or vests, and one wonders how they were recognized in the woman's wardrobe. A *fornimento da parto* (ensemble for childbirth) would have been a set of clothes or linen. One silk-lined cloak was trimmed in black fur. Presumably linen would have been for displaying the clean newborn to visitors, and while the pregnant and delivered mother may have worn nightgowns, vests, and dresses, they would have been preserved from the birthing event itself, messy as it was.

The time around a woman's wedding was when her wardrobe was richest and fullest. Her wedding gown was of silken velvets and satin and white—a color banned to all except brides and nuns—and cloth of gold (as allowed by law). She was decorated with all sorts of jewelry, part of her dowry. Her family donated lots of clothing to her trousseau, which usually counted as part of her dowry. Her fiancé added a counter-dowry that also contained elaborate clothing and cloth for future ensembles. In 1447 Florentine Marco Parenti recorded the wardrobe portion of the trousseau of his new wife, Caterina Strozzi. It included 17 embroidered *camicie*, two gowns, three overgowns with linings of marten fur and embroidered sleeves, 42 veils, 27 caps, 31 handkerchiefs, 3 pairs of red stockings, and two collars. Additionally she brought 17 lengths of expensive fabric, and he provided 24 bolts of fine cloth in his counter-dowry, along with a lined red silk velvet overdress and a head-dress covered in 800 peacock feathers. Two final points: the counter-dowry actually belonged to him and he could pawn, rent out, or loan the gown and peacock garland as a favor to whomever he wished. Also, the inclusion of both bundles of cloth looked to future wardrobe needs; often brides were rather young, and their bodies were likely to change.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Cloth Trade; Clothmaking; Women in the Labor Force; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Children; Court, Fashion at; Fabrics, Domestic; Fabrics, Imported; Headgear; Religious Habits and Vestment; Shoes and Footwear; Social Status and Clothing; Sumptuary Laws; Underclothing; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; *Primary Document*: Of Gowns, Housegowns, and Dirty Laundry: Letters of Margherita Datini to Her Husband, Francesco Datini (1397–1398)

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ATTIRE, MALE

We might be inclined to think that women had a wide range of fashion choices like they do today, and that, as today, there is rather less variety in male wardrobes. In fact, though there is a huge vocabulary for women's garments, and many of these articles were made of fabulous fabrics adorned with works of outstanding craftsmanship, males had the wider range of clothing types and wore the same fabrics and colors as women.

Of course, not every male wore all or even most of the types of clothing available at one time. The pope, the soldier, the merchant, the duke, the physician, the galley slave, and the male prostitute each had distinctive costuming that did not overlap with the others. And, of course, a given man might have several ensembles,



The otherwise-unidentified *Knight in Black* was painted by G. B. Moroni (1520/24–1579), a northern Italian artist in 1567. He dresses in all black, typical of the Spanish-influenced later sixteenth century, with just a bit of clean white ruff showing at the collar. He sports a jaunty plumed black hat and draws attention by placement of his hand on his sword, a privilege of knighthood. Oil on canvas. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

worked something like a tight-fitting button-fronted jacket and was sold and tailored by specialists (known in Venice as the *zuponerii*). In 1427 Florence listed

changing them as needed. The pope wore a set of riding gear when hunting, vestments when saying Mass, his cassock and cope when relaxing or dining, and dress of state when presiding over a meeting of the Papal Curia. Even an artisan was likely to have his work clothes, dress clothes for Mass and festivals, rugged wear for street sports, and his confraternity's robe, hat, and belt for their gatherings. If elected or appointed to a political or bureaucratic office he might have to acquire additional garments appropriate to his new office.

As a man aged, not only did fashion trends move along, but his social status was also likely to change, and this might affect his wardrobe. Young men exhibiting their masculinity tended to display their hose-enclosed legs more often than older males did. Typical were soled or unsoled hose that were as tight as possible and held as tautly as possible by being fastened to the doublet covering the torso. Beneath the doublet was a clean, white undershirt called the *camicia*. The male version was long-sleeved, though shorter than a woman's and perhaps decorated with needlework trimming. The long-sleeved doublet

58 doublet-makers, 4 of whom were women. The fabric was usually quilted, filled with cotton batting and faced with rich cloth such as velvet, silk or brocade, or suede or even cotton if meant to be worn only under a tunic. The front often descended in a point to the groin, where it met either the sewn or laced front of the hose or the codpiece, a bag for the genitals that also served as a pocket.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries men covered both with a tunic that fell to some level between the groin and knees. This outer layer could be of very fine fabric and cut in any number of ways. One of the most variable areas was the sleeve. It could be tight or puffy, cuffed or not, slashed to show the doublet's material beneath, low hanging like a giant pocket, or simply missing. The last was typical of men who worked manually. Fashion trends usually determined an acceptable tunic sleeve. Belted or not, and doublet permitting, the tunic could show strips of clean *camicia* at the cuffs, collars, and sleeves. Fashion could even overturn such a basic triad, as in later fifteenth-century Florence, when the tunic went out of style and the tops of hose had to become rather more presentable. This changed in the sixteenth century, when across Italy tight breeches or puffy trousers came into style to cover the hips and thighs.

Older men of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries wore belted or unbelted woolen gowns or robes, often with great capes or cloaks that gave them the substantial profiles so evident in Florentine paintings. Sometimes the gown was collared, but more often a bit of *camicia* white peeked out from behind the black or deep red. Gowns and cape were often lined with squirrel or marten fur, which showed at the cuffs and collars. Underneath they wore breeches or trousers. In the sixteenth century, gowns remained to certain professions such as physicians, priests, and university professors, while even mature men took to wearing exposed breeches and trousers.

Pants were traditionally associated with laborers, peasants, and soldiers. They also had to be worn while horseback riding. So the shift to these was somewhat radical. While Italians set many style trends and fads, they also absorbed much from neighboring cultures. Men sailed about the Mediterranean, traded with foreigners, welcomed visitors on state or commercial business, and watched as foreign soldiers marched across the peninsula. In the early sixteenth century the dagger became a male accessory for show as well as utility. Soon it was joined by elaborately crafted matching swords that also hung jauntily from specially designed belts. The adoption of pants may have been reinforced by the masculine image of the man of war. French, German, Hungarian, Turkish, and especially Spanish influences shaped male fashion at least as much as it did women's fashions. Some of this was dampened by sumptuary laws, but then it was men who made the laws.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Cloth Trade; Clothmaking; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Children; Court, Fashion at; Fabrics,

Domestic; Fabrics, Imported; Headgear; Livery; Religious Habits and Vestment; Shoes and Footwear; Social Status and Clothing; Sumptuary Laws; Underclothing; *Politics and Warfare*: Soldiers; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; *Primary Document*: Of Gowns, Housegowns, and Dirty Laundry: Letters of Margherita Datini to Her Husband, Francesco Datini (1397–1398)

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BATHING AND PERSONAL HYGIENE

Renaissance-era Italian culture highly valued personal cleanliness. One's appearance and smell suggested social class, occupation, education, and even moral virtue. Offensive personal smells might indicate disease, or at least rudeness and lack of concern for others. Dirty clothing could mean poverty or carelessness, and dirty hands not only a dirty occupation but a countrified attitude toward urban norms. Cleanliness was a mark of respectability and self-esteem, of self-control and refinement, perhaps even of spiritual virtue. The Renaissance era cherished human beauty and disdained those factors that reduced it, whether by nature or choice. Women were probably held to a higher standard than men, and this may have been in both city and countryside.

To clean oneself in the course of a day generally meant to wash one's hands, face, and perhaps head, and to change from clothes one was wearing, preferably into ones recently laundered. Full body baths in warm or hot water presented problems. In the age of plague and belief in poisoned air (miasma) as its cause, which meant the entire Renaissance era, physicians generally steered people away from an activity that opened one's pores. This was considered especially dangerous during hot, dry summers. Warm and humid spring weather struck them as providing a safer period, and for those who indulged in an annual bath, it generally occurred in the Easter season. Nonetheless, Italy was covered with warm springs and around these grew up spas that offered water and mud from tepid to hot. The wealthy, the poor, and the diseased flocked to these, and residing physicians seemed to have cared little for the dangers of open pores. In cities, clean water was often hard to come by, and only the wealthy could really afford the amount necessary for even a single full tub. Heating water in such amounts also presented problems.

The wealthy answered such limitations with servants and some nifty gadgets. Since cleans hands and faces were expected at table, villas and palazzi often featured decorated wall niches located at about elbow level and near rooms used for dining. Water was heated over a fire in a metal sphere, which was then hung over a drained basin in the niche. The sphere featured a tap near the bottom from which hot water was dispensed. Servants refilled the spheres and probably kept basins of warm water handy.

Indoor plumbing was by no means common, but men like Pope Clement VII and Duke Federigo da Montefeltro, lord of Urbino, insisted on it. In his *stufetta* (bathroom) Clement installed a marble bath featuring hot and cold running faucets and had the walls heated internally by circulated hot air—essentially a sauna. Federigo's palace featured both hot and tepid bathing rooms, an idea he probably derived from the far fancier public baths of ancient Roman cities. Whether for hygiene or therapy, bathing revived ancient custom, as explained in the 497 folio pages of *Everything Extant on Baths* (1553).

Some barbers offered a bath along with a shave and bleeding, and some cities allowed public bathhouses, with alternating times for men and women. Many of these had been closed following the Black Death and fear of both contagion and open pores. This caution had largely subsided by the sixteenth century, and they made a comeback. The old fear was replaced, however, by public disgust with the stubborn presence of prostitutes and new fear of syphilis and other venereal diseases.

Soap was more common than one might think. Unlike northern formulas that used animal fat, Mediterranean soaps were olive oil-based and included tree ash high in soda. It was imported from the Near East and Spain, and the finest Italian brands were Venetian. In small molded bars or other shapes it sold in mercers' and

apothecaries' shops; Florence even had specialty soap stores. The problem was that the soap stank and needed to be scented. Giovanventura Rosetti in a 1555 *Book of Secrets* provided 18 recipes for hand soaps. In one, flaked raw white soap is soaked for 7 to 10 days in rosewater, dried, ground, and mixed with mahaleb cherry pit, balsam, musk, and spikenard. The mixture is molded in small forms, dried, and stored in a decorated wooden box. Barber soaps often used musk, or cloves, and other spices, many of whose scents were considered to have therapeutic properties. Especially soft or liquid soaps were used for sexual lubrication and even found their ways into poetry and stories.

Hygiene also meant dealing with body parasites such as fleas, nits, and lice. The working poor who had few changes of clothing suffered especially during the winter, another reason for springtime baths. Barbers routinely checked scalps for insects, and mothers picked nits from their children's heads as a matter of course. Barbers also handled sources of unpleasant bodily odors, such as rotting teeth and open sores.

Soap

The ancients used olive oil to raise body dirt and a flat tool to scrape it away. Urban and rural households had their recipes for body soap, some later printed in *Secrets* books. Genoa developed commercial soap production, then Venice, which in 1303 forbade export of soap workers or alum. By the 1500s soap manufacturers were located all across Italy, marketing brands such as The Ball, The Chains, The Sun, and The Pinecone. Scent was optional. These were sold itinerantly or from retail stores, including Florence's specialty soap shops. Valued for lubrication, soap was as much for sex as for cleansing.

Finally, hygiene meant disposing of human waste. Cities collected urine that could be used industrially, and some collected feces for manuring fields. Cesspits for collecting waste might be open or beneath a projecting closet with a hole in the floor. A close stool was a cubic box with a bucket inside and a hole on top over which one sat. One cleaned oneself with a (one hopes) frequently laundered toilet towel or natural sponge.

See also: *Family and Gender:* Health and Illness; *Virtù* and Honor; *Fashion and Appearance:* Laundry; Scents and Perfumes; *Housing and Community:* Barbers and Surgeons; Health Commissions and Boards; Sewage, Sewerage, and Public Sanitation

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COSMETICS

Feminine beauty was prized and praised by just about everyone in Renaissance-era Italian society, except certain male moralists, preachers, and proto-feminist women writers. Beauty was associated with goodness, truth, and godliness. It was a major attribute of God and His realm, as exemplified by Dante's "Paradise." Female beauty had been celebrated by the ancients, by medieval poets, especially Petrarch, and was considered a sign of female nobility. A woman's beauty attracted a husband and kept him interested, and served courtesans and prostitutes to draw customers. Most women appreciated some or all of these points and encouraged beauty's pursuit among their family members and peers. But despite beauty's connection to truth, men and women alike recognized that artificial means were often necessary to correct nature's deficiencies. Genetics, rashes and diseases, the sun, accidents, violence, and age could lessen a woman's beauty. Cosmetics could counteract many of these effects.

The ideal of beauty was supposedly based in humoral theory and was celebrated by Petrarchan poets. A woman was by nature cold and moist, which implied that her skin tone should be naturally pale and soft. Her hair, too, should be light in tone, and her cheeks tinged pink or reddish, but not ruddy. The poet Petrarch's Laura possessed such noble beauty: her shining forehead was high, her hair golden, dark eyes lustrous, lips ruby, soft hands white, and her smile radiant. While some Italian women fit this pattern, most did not, as natural Mediterranean complexions tended to be dark. Pale skin also implied that a woman kept out of the sun, a mark of higher social class. Dark skin suggested long hours in the fields, and was less prized the further north in Italy one went. Real women's faces had unbalanced features, and facial skin that was pocked, freckled, pimples, scarred, wrinkled, and discolored. Cosmetics could help.

Apothecaries and charlatans sold preparations from their shops or street corners. “Wise women” in both urban and rural areas might sell cosmetic creams or ointments along with medicines, amulets, and magical potions. In cities older Jewish women were noted as expert cosmeticians, since many had traveled extensively and supposedly tapped into ancient and esoteric traditions. One such was Anna the Jewess of Rome who even sold a black face cream to noblewoman Caterina Sforza.

So-called Books of Secrets featured dozens of cosmetic recipes and tips. One of the most popular was *Secrets of Signora Isabella Cortese* (1561, with seven more editions by 1599); others included Giovanni Marinello’s *Ornaments of Women* (1569), Eustachio Celebrino’s *New Work . . . for Making Every Woman Beautiful* (1551), and the Neapolitan Giambattista della Porta’s *Natural Magic* (1558). Della Porta’s Ninth Book—of 20—addresses *How to Adorn Women and Make Them Beautiful*. Recipes treat hair (bleaching), teeth, body odor, and skin quality. Several suggest means for whitening the face and hands, including white lead, and for removing pimples, warts, and wrinkles. The work attributed to Isabella Cortese is subtitled *In Which Are Included Mineral, Man-Made, and Alchemical Things and Many Things Concerning the Art of Perfumery, Suitable for Any Lady*. Its widely ranging contents have been characterized as a mixture of science, medicine, popular traditions, magic, and astrology. *Ornaments of Women* features no fewer than 26 recipes for dyeing dark hair lighter shades from red to dark blonde.

Some ingredients were exotic imports available at an apothecary’s shop. Rouge could be prepared from expensive red dye materials brazilwood or vergino wood. The first was mixed with readily available alum and lime; the second with rosewater and oil. Either could be applied to a woman’s lips or cheeks or a courtesan’s nipples. Suet, wine, marjoram, and musk or civet were blended to make a lip balm, as were various combinations of olive oil, butter, fat, wax, rosewater, and musk or civet. A face cream consisted of rosewater, cinnamon, rock salt, and a virginal boy’s urine. The popularity of alchemy meant that organic ingredients were often replaced or mixed with metals, minerals, or salts, including silver sublimate, borax, alum, sulfur, and mercuric sulfide to redden the cheeks.

A woman might apply various facial cosmetics herself or with the aid of a servant; in either case she would need a mirror. One or more were included in a woman’s toilette, and was often a component of her trousseau. Some were hung on the wall, often covered by curtains to protect them, while others were hand held or stood on a little stand. Made of highly polished steel or a glass plate silvered on the back, they could be flat or convex for magnifying. One’s reflection was rather dark, but this improved across the sixteenth century as mercury-coated tin foil replaced silver. As one wag put it, mirrors were meant to reflect the truth, even if cosmetics were attempts to hide it.

Women also employed a range of other toilette items, including hair and powder brushes, combs, cloths, sponges, pointed sticks, tweezers, and a range of containers in which to keep cosmetics, hair dyes, and perfumes. These were often stored in small and ornate boxes, either imported or Near Eastern in style, and made of bone, ivory, silver, or painted wood.

Critics warned against the physical damage done by many concoctions, and preachers against the spiritual damage done by surrendering to vanity and falsifying one's appearance. Only whores and not honest women needed to lure men. Even 18-year-old widow Laura Cereta, in a letter of 1487, condemned exaggerated hair styles, makeup, and the vanity that was the "weakness of our sex."

See also: *Arts*: Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; *Fashion and Appearance*: Hair and Hairstyles; Scents and Perfumes; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; *Religion and Beliefs*: Preachers and Preaching; *Science and Technology*: Alchemy; Secrets, Books of

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COURT, FASHION AT

Italian noble courts were established in the later Middle Ages and throughout the Renaissance era. The only royal court was at Naples, and it became a Spanish viceroyal court in the sixteenth century. The papacy had a kind of court that ruled the Papal States and was centered at the Vatican, but it literally lacked a woman's touch. While there were nieces, daughters, concubines, and courtesans, these came and went with the change of pontiff, and none had a real effect on the culture. Though it had a duke, or doge, and dogressa, Venice was a republic that also lacked a court altogether. Florence, too, was a republic, at least until the early sixteenth century. The fifteenth-century Medicis had treated the state like their estate but maintained the appearance of first among equals rather than *signori*. Sixteenth-century Medici were dukes and then grand dukes and left republican

Florence far behind, establishing an Italian court with a culture second to none. Northern Italy had been studded with noble courts throughout the era, and the Medici borrowed from whomever they wished. The fifteenth century had been the heyday of Italian courts, the years before the wars descended on the peninsula and destroyed the old order. Montefeltro Urbino, Gonzaga Mantua, D'Este Ferrara, Savoyard Turin, and Milan of the Visconti and Sforzas truly set the tone.

In the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries Italian courts emerged or survived from the small-scale wars that moved across Italy like storm clouds. The lords, or *signori*, gained and held power by force, and several were mercenary leaders who served larger states. They tended to take their cultural cues from the French and Burgundian courts to the north. The papacy's stay in Avignon placed it in their orbit as well, as did the large number of French cardinals and popes who carried northern cultural values back to Italy. Early Renaissance court fashions, then, were largely imitative of northern fashions, which are sometimes labeled late Gothic. Both men's and women's clothing tended to the fanciful, with emphases on fine but showy materials and accessories, and sometimes outlandish fads. Northern soldiers who descended into Italy during lulls in the Hundred Years' War brought with them martial male fashions that tended to masculinize tendencies at the *signori*'s courts.

The establishment and spread of Italian silk production in the fifteenth century and rising Italian disposable wealth shifted the direction of court fashions. The male doublet-tunic-hose ensemble lost some of its frippery and more sober colors replaced mixed or garish ones. Women's garments continued to be made of the finest materials available, but their silhouettes were more naturalized by the later fifteenth century. This was, however, no turning away from fashion. Courts were consciously competing with one another culturally, seeking the grandest gardens, latest architecture, finest art and music; humanists taught boys and girls alike; ambassadors were the social media of the day and spread scorn or praise for the centers of regional power they visited. Dress, from that of the ruling couple to servants at table, had to be clean, expensive, tasteful, and new each time a banquet, hunt, or ball was held. Visitors from abroad wore new fashions that resonated and were copied, or brought news of novelties from distant courts. When a duke married a foreign wife, she brought trunks filled with the latest garments from her home as well as ones tailored to please her new husband. The taste for Spanish black of Lucrezia Borgia or Eleanora of Toledo sent courtiers running. Platoons of tailors and seamstresses stood by to rework or update older garments or fashion new ones.

Subjects in Ferrara or Mantua and citizens in republican Florence or Siena only had to be concerned with the opinions of their neighbors for the sake of their honor. At court, however, the dynamic was more complicated. Servants, musicians, chefs, guards, gardeners, huntsmen, and other lower echelon court functionaries were

clothed to please the ruling family and were expected to maintain their wardrobes. Courtiers, male and female, on the other hand, made their own choices. A fashion slip-up could cost a young champion or lady-in-waiting his or her position. Throughout Italy clothing was a kind of language, but at court even the accent had to be perfect. For their parts, the rulers were the face of the state, and as admittedly small players they could not afford to appear as country bumpkins to their royal or Imperial betters or their representatives. Honor was at stake.

Across Italy the trend in the sixteenth century was toward a soberer, almost more mature expression through dress. Rulers and male subjects lost the skirting of tunics and adopted breeches; males grew beards; Spanish influence from Sicily to Milan turned Italians to darker colors, and perhaps a greater sense of dignity. This was especially true at court. Extravagance and expense were still the watchwords for dress, but the effect was to be understated: elegance rather than novelty or show. While nobles did not impose sumptuary laws on themselves, they effectively did so by choosing to emulate the pious Iberians and follow the spirit of the Catholic Reformation.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Courtly; Dance, Courtly; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Cloth Trade; *Fashion and Appearance*: Art, Fashion in; Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Bathing and Personal Hygiene; Cosmetics; Fabrics, Domestic; Fabrics, Imported; Fashion in Art; Gems and Jewelry; Headgear; Livery; Scents and Perfumes; Social Status and Clothing; Tailors and Seamstresses; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Death in the Community; Gardens; Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Noble Pursuits

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DYES AND DYESTUFFS

Fashion demanded color, and dyes provided it. Color as a marker of status depended on the expense of the dye producing the color, and top of the list was crimson. Civic laws, especially sumptuary laws, restricted the use of certain colors, adding layers to meaning that color gave clothing.

Before chemical dyes, all had to be derived from organic animal or vegetable sources. Woad, a plant related to mustard, was the most commonly used dyestuff. It produced a range of blues from a sky-blue to turquoise to nearly black. It was grown in and exported from Lombardy, and often blended with other dyes to produce desired shades. Also grown in northern and central Italy, or imported through Venice, was a vine related to gardenia and coffee, robbia or madder. Its red root produced the most common red color. Orchil was a lichen-based dye that, when prepared with ammonia derived from urine, produced a range of violet to red shades. The name of the famous Rucellai family of Florence derives from that of the plant. Indigo is another vegetable blue to violet dye source that was imported into Italy from India and later the Americas. Mixed with woad it gave greens and blues, and with madder and orchil a very deep and prized blue, *alessandrino*. Other vegetable dyes included weld and saffron, which produced shades of yellow; brazilwood a red dyestuff imported from Asia and the Americas; sappan wood, which provided the red known as *verzino*; and logwood, which produced a tolerable black.

Imported insects provided a second major source of dyes. The tiny, desiccated corpses were broken up into small grain-like particles for storing, shipping, and use, so some are often simply called *grana*. The prized source of crimson was the pregnant oak parasite the kermes lice, shipped from the Near East and Southwest Asia. Specifically labeled *cherimisi* or *cremisi* in Italy, it was very expensive. Grana was a less expensive Mediterranean shield louse product that was considered inferior to *cherimisi*. As a scarlet it tended to orange, but could produce ruby, rose, and deep blues to violet. A Mexican import eventually replaced the other insect-based dyes. Cochineal was derived from a scaled insect found on cacti, and had long been used by Meso-Americans as a dyestuff. It provided the same, if not a better, crimson than the kermes, and the dye matter was in a much greater concentration in these

little corpses. As it happened, insect-based dyes did not work well on vegetable-fiber cloth such as cotton or linen. Given their cost, however, it really was fitting that they be used on fine woolens and silks, satins, velvets, and brocades.

Dye could be applied to thread, yarn, or finished cloth. The material had to be thoroughly clean. A dyer first used a mordant (*mordere*, to bite into) to open up the fibers before applying the dye. There were several types of mordant, including oak gall-based tannin, cream of tartar, alum (a major source of which was discovered at Tolfa in the Papal States in 1461), and varieties using chromium or iron. The process usually had several steps. A solution of the appropriate mordant was prepared and the material soaked or boiled in it. After drying, the acidic or base solution of dyestuff(s) was prepared and the cloth soaked or boiled in it for the predetermined time, the

cloth being agitated with paddles to ensure an even saturation. After rinsing and drying to determine the actual color achieved, second or third trips to the dye vats took place if further darkening was required. The dyer's yard had to be quite large to fit the various vats and accommodate all of the materials drying at their various stages. The stench was notorious, and the need for running water for rinsing meant the yard should be located along the river, out of town, and downstream. Dyers rarely owned the cloth they dyed; they were essentially subcontractors. Some, however, formed partnerships with cloth merchants, especially if these could import dyestuffs more cheaply than they could be purchased locally. Venice was the main port of entry for imported dyes, and from here they were sold wholesale to apothecaries and increasingly "colorsellers" who specialized in painters' pigments and dyes.



Eighteenth-century English painting of *Isatis tinctoria*, or dyer's woad. The leaves were dyed, pulverized, and fermented to create a deep-blue pigment that was bested only when indigo became readily available in Europe. Woad grew well in Tuscany and Piedmont, and is related to the cabbage family. (Florilegius/SSPL/Getty Images)

Like other workers in chemistry-based crafts, such as ceramics and glass, dyers had traditionally protected their secrets. In 1548 Giovan Rosetti, an officer at the Venetian shipyard, published *Instructions in the Art of the Dyers*, the first work to lay out many of the artisans' techniques. Like his later book on perfumes, this was meant to spread the craft among Venetians. A recipe for dyeing a cloth scarlet begins with clean water in which ½ ounce of rock alum, one ounce of white tartar, and one pound of cloth has been stirred in. After boiling this, the cloth is removed, rinsed, and dried. Six ounces of the scarlet-producing grana and bran are mixed in water and the cloth boiled in it for an hour. The cloth is then placed twice in a rinse of bran, one pound of tartar, and one pound of alum. Finally it is given a bath in highly diluted arsenic. Some secrets were worth sharing.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Clothmaking; Guilds; Trade, Seaborne; *Fashion and Appearance:* Attire, Children; Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Fabrics, Domestic; Fabrics, Imported; Social Status and Clothing; Sumptuary Laws; *Science and Technology:* Alchemy; Secrets, Books of

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FABRICS, DOMESTIC

By the fifteenth century Italy was producing much of the raw material needed to produce the period's fabrics. Italians also imported a good deal of cotton, silk, linen flax, and wool, but it was the transformation into finished cloth that made it a domestic product.

Generally speaking, silks had pride of place. At the high end were satins, various velvets, damasks, and brocades. Satin was shiny on one side and matte finished on the other; specialists in Milan and Lucca produced the finest cloths. Velvets

were produced by pulling threads up in little loops from the basic weave. Often this was done to create patterns on the fabric, such as the common pomegranate. The treated surface could be high or low, or the loops quite long resulting in a plush surface. A very rich velvet might be shot through with gold or silver threads. Milan, Genoa, and Venice produced some of Italy's finest velvets. Damask weaves create a patterned surface from a single color by blending shiny and matte surfaces that also appear in reverse on the reverse side. Though the cloth's name reveals its origin, Genoese and Venetian weavers appropriated the technique. Using gold or silver wire to create patterns is called brocading, and this technique was used to upgrade damasks (damaschino) and high-end satins. Velvets were the most expensive silk fabrics, though the addition of gold or silver thread or wire could multiply the price of even taffeta several times.

At the lower end was taffeta, which featured a plain weave, a heavy version of which could be upgraded to tabi or tabina by creating patterns with gold or silver threads. Taffetas could also be made shinier by stretching the fabric uniformly and applying diluted gum Arabic to the surface. Bolognese craftsmen wove multicolored taffetas that gave the effect of changing colors as the wearer moved. Further down was the heavy utility silk known as ormesino, a Venetian specialty, and Florentine zendado, a light-weight taffeta that was used for the linings of clothing. Bologna and Modena specialized in a light open-weave cloth called veiling.

Woolens came in many forms, from cheap, heavy garbo—named for a wool source in North Africa—to fine light tropical weaves popular in the eastern Mediterranean, and carefully finished heavier fabrics demanded in northern climates. Fine wool fabric was about the same price as a low-end velvet or a high-end damask. The quantity and quality of different woolens depended on the types of sheep supplying the wool, the weaves applied at the loom, and the treatment of the cloth once it left the loom. With silk, what left the loom was the finished product. Florence and Siena were traditional centers of wool cloth production, with competition from Milan. In the sixteenth century Venice stepped in and came to dominate the export market to the Near East for expensive products. Genoa also stepped up its production, as did Milan. One factor was the new merino wool that came from Spanish and later Neapolitan ports. This was behind the new cloth type of the later fifteenth century called rascia, which was a fine, light serge that was often dyed a dark color. It was perfect for mourners, who usually dressed in dark brown or black. It exported well, too, and was known in the north as serge of Florence. Italian cloth-making had always been in a dialogue with cloth imported from northern Europe or the Mediterranean. Often enough, the Italians mastered the foreign technique and made it their own. A good example was a stretchy wool called perpignano used for men's hose. Knitted wool could do the job, but this fabric originally from Perpignan in southern France made for a better appearance. By around 1400 it was an Italian product.

Northern sources for linen fabrics included Rheims in France, which originated rensa, and Cambrai in Flanders, from which cambric had been imported. Both of these became Italian varieties by the fifteenth century. Linen was made from the fibrous plant flax, which was commonly grown in Italy, especially around Naples. Lower-status households bought the fiber, spun and wove it, and made their own undergarments and other clothing from the durable material. Professional linen weavers in centers such as Florence, Siena, Perugia, and Cremona could create a number of special fabrics, from canvas to a blend with silk called brocatello used for wall hangings. Linen was treated with oil to make it translucent and used in window frames. Towels, table linens, bed linens, and high-end underwear were made of the relatively inexpensive fabric, in a form close to buckram.

Cotton was grown in the Po Valley, but high-quality bolls came from Muslim markets, especially in Egypt. Soft and easily laundered, cotton undergarments were popular, as was a utilitarian cotton blend known as fustian. Cheap domestic cotton batting called bambagia was used to pad expensive furniture and in fine quilted doublets.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work*: Cloth Trade; Clothmaking; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Dyes and Dyestuffs; Fabrics, Imported; Social Status and Clothing; Sumptuary Laws

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FABRICS, IMPORTED

Though Italy was known for its fabrics, Italians imported a wide variety of raw materials for cloth-making, partially finished cloths, and even finished garments. While some of this was for re-export, much stayed in Italian shops and homes.

In the fourteenth century, Italians made many types of fabric for their own use, but imported expensive products from both the Near East and northern Europe. Silks from Mongol-controlled regions in Central Asia had distinctive and very popular patterns known as Tatar patterns. So-called tiny patterns remained in vogue until about 1400, but much larger images of birds, flowers, and fantastic beasts had a strong market until cut off by Turkish conquests. High demand for silks encouraged importation of silk-making technology and worms, and soon Italian looms were easily competing with those of Eastern countries. Nonetheless, fine velvets were shipped from and through Mamluk-controlled Alexandria to Venice and beyond, and when the Turks took Egypt in 1517 the flow continued. Turkey itself produced silks in Western Anatolia with raw silk obtained from Iran. Italian merchants from Venice, Florence, and Genoa brought Italian goods to Bursa to trade for Iranian raw silk as well as cloth such as brocaded velvets. As Venetian silk production grew, the city embargoed these imports.

Despite Italian production of wool cloth, Italy's merchants welcomed wool cloth and cloth products from its trading universe. Cloth of varying quality came from Turkey, North Africa, and Britain (worsted). Weavers in Bruges produced so-called Norwich say (Italian *saia*), a fine twill with diagonal ribbing, and serge, a heavier version of say. These, too, found ready markets in Italy, where weavers developed their own version known as rascia. By 1500 Flanders was competing well for Italian demand, and with 600 looms, a city like Tournai was in a good position. Woolen velvets came from Northwestern Europe and North Africa and wool plush from Ireland and the Balkans. Wool cloth right off the loom had several steps left before it was considered finished. At these the Florentines and other Italians excelled, so merchants often bought woven but unfinished wool and had Italian craftsmen complete the process.

France and Flanders created and exported fine upper-end linen cloth, and to a lesser extent, woolens. Rheims and Cambrai provided linen and Perpignan in southern France a perfect wool material for hosiery. The simple woolen cloth camellet was originally woven of goat or camel hair in the Near East, and North Africans blended linen and cotton into boccacino. Superior raw cotton came from or through the Muslim world, as did such cloth as Indian muslin, used as mosquito netting. Painted or printed cotton, or chint (chintz), arrived in Italian ports from dealers in the Near East or, by 1500, through Portuguese merchants in India.

While furs are not, strictly speaking, fabrics, they were used in clothing for cuffs, collars, linings of cloaks, capes, slippers, hoods, and hats. South of the Alps Italy is warm, so animal furs are not as thick or long as those from northern Europe or Russia. Squirrel, sable, lynx, marten, snow weasel, polecat, and civet cat were common choices. Ermine, which came from Russia through Constantinople or Scandinavia, was the deluxe fur, often reserved by sumptuary laws to nobles or high office holders. Usually locally grown were dormouse, fox, wolf, wildcat,

and rabbit. Depending on the size of the pelt, it could take scores of them to line a single garment. Two hundred ermine-like creatures were needed for Caterina Parenti's day gown.

Over the 250 years of the Renaissance era there were many trends that affected the importation of cloth. Some of these were wars, conquests, Italian adaptation of foreign techniques, economic competition within Italy and with non-Italian powers, and state policies regarding imports, especially in Venice. Issues included whose ships might bring goods to port, which foreign ports they could visit, and levels of tariffs or port taxes. Italians proved brilliant at copying others and even outdoing them. By the end of the era, however, Ottoman looms were again competing in the Mediterranean, and light Dutch and other northern European cloths were flying off Italian shelves. Guild regulations and relatively high wages often made Italian wares more expensive than comparable imports. Throughout the era imported fabrics found favor among Italians.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work*: Cloth Trade; Clothmaking; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Dyes and Dyestuffs; Fabrics, Domestic; Social Status and Clothing; Sumptuary Laws

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FACIAL HAIR

Jesus wore a beard; or so medieval and Renaissance-era artists invariably indicated. So did the Apostles—except young John—and many male saints; and even God the Father. Yet for the first century and a half of the Renaissance era Italian fashion left

facial hair to peasants, pilgrims, southern barons, hermits, galley slaves, Jews, and foreigners. Fourteenth and fifteenth-century northern Europeans, Greeks, Turks, Arabs, “Hungarians,” and others sported facial manes of greater or lesser luxuriance, and it may be that urban northern Italians set themselves apart from these “others” by subjecting themselves to the razor’s edge. None but clean-shaven faces adorn northern Italian portraits before 1500, whether of pope, prince, patrician, or poet. Among southerners the picture is different, as the influences of rural feudalism and the Spanish in Naples set a hairier tone for their elites. Yet, around 1500 northern Italian men began letting their beards go, and by the 1530s few of those staring down from art gallery walls lack a manly growth. Horowitz speculates that this was due to Columbus’s discovery of beardless native men in the New World and the desire of Italian men to distinguish themselves from these new “others.”

But a more immediate catalyst may well have been the series of wars begun when the French invaded the peninsula in 1494. Armies of variously bearded Spanish, French, German, and Swiss soldiers campaigned for decades across northern Italy seemingly immune to the forces mustered by city-state republics, duchies, or even the papacy. These virile—and often victorious—interlopers provided countless models of masculinity as a new generation of Italian men came of age in an Italy they did not control. Just as the slit sleeves of the German Landsknechts became fashionable among Italian young men, so too beards became the norm among Italy’s sixteenth-century urban males, whether pope, prince, patrician, or poet. Early in the century Pope Julius II vowed to grow his beard until he had recaptured all the lost Papal States; Pope Clement VII began his beard during the Sack of Rome by Imperial troops in 1527. A series of portraits of Tuscany’s young duke Cosimo I seem tinged with anticipation as his late-blooming beard progresses from teenage peach fuzz to a never-quite-respectable male ornament by age 40. The century’s men of letters let their beards tumble down their fronts as freely as the words flowed from their pens. Courtiers were warned in Della Casa’s *Galateo* to adapt their beards to local fashion, while Castiglione advised—typically—moderation in display, with the beard shorter rather than longer.

And a display is just what the beard became. The trend may have begun in insecurity, but it quickly took its place among the tools of male self-fashioning. Beards can take many forms: short, medium, long, full and well-shaped or unkempt, bushy or tapered, trimmed around the edges or full-faced, long and forked. Mustaches by themselves were rare, perhaps associated with unsavory ethnic stereotypes. But when part of the beard, they could overflow the upper lip or be clipped high, and the ends might be blended downward or pulled out to the sides. The display was a particularly masculine one, conveying any of a wide range of characters, from fierce to philosophical. Being exclusively a feature of the mature male, the beard also signaled sexual potency. Of course the darker the color the more likely the

signal was an accurate one. For the prematurely gray or white-bearded, barbers and apothecaries had tints and dyes in a wide range of shades. One might think that beard-wearing would dampen the profits of barbers. As Anton Doni's ghost points out (see box that follows), however, barbers could play an even greater role than earlier. Any man could shave himself, but lacking decent mirrors he could hardly maintain a well-coiffed beard. And just as fashion magazines today suggest current fashions, so broadsheets, book author portraits, and prints of recently finished paintings provided ample examples of the day's trends and trendsetters.

Without a national court Italy's many centers of power collected courtiers who wore a range of styles of beards. By mid-century, with Spain in control of Naples and Milan, and Tuscany's Duchess a Spaniard, it was fairly safe to adopt the neatly trimmed Spanish fashions of the court of Philip II. The Italian virtue of *sprezzatura*—nonchalance—however, dictated that a courtier should sport a beard that appeared to have grown naturally, with little in the way of primping. To fuss over one's looks was considered effeminate. Full beards were also a means of hiding men's features and emotions, often very useful at court.

Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow

The spirit of a dead Venetian barber in Anton Francesco Doni's *The Worlds* (1552/53) says: "They all seem a caged gaggle of crazy people who live on the earth, because of the thousands that I have shaved washed, combed, and slapped together, I fixed up one just as I did the other. . . . Many want the long beard, many the beard cut half way, some in two parts, rounded, shorn, with the mustaches, without mustaches, one who shaved below, one who did so on top, on the scruff of the neck, beneath the throat, and other bizarre things. Young people all keen on having a beard shave themselves often. Old men have their beards dyed to look and feel young."

Source: Biow, Douglas. *On the Importance of Being an Individual in Renaissance Italy*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015, p. 213.

A beard might also hide one's gender, and Biow points to the case of a Venetian courtesan who had no fewer than five bearded masks. While these might have been useful in certain sex games, they may have played a less kinky role during Carnival. During this annual celebration of normality overturned, women could appear as men without breaking the typical laws forbidding cross-dressing. Transvestitism was also known in female convents, especially in Venice. Women performing in plays as male characters were known to have sported fake beards as well as men's clothing, both of which were forbidden repeatedly by Church authorities.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Barbers and Surgeons; *Family and Gender*: *Virtù* and Honor; *Fashion and Appearance*: Art, Fashion in; Hair and Hairstyles; *Politics and Warfare*: Soldiers; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; *Religion and Beliefs*: Nuns and Nunneries; Saints and Their Cults

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GEMS AND JEWELRY

Gems and gold jewelry played important roles in Renaissance-era Italian society. They carried important symbolic, moral, and even supposed medicinal properties; they were a means of adornment that enhanced and signaled the status of a woman and her husband; and they were an important form of liquid wealth. From coral to diamonds, gemstones had long circulated in Italy. Trade through the Muslim world brought a steady supply of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, amethysts, garnets, turquoise, and pearls from India and East Asia. Some stones made their way north from central Africa, and topaz, emeralds, jade, and pearls eastward from the Americas. The era saw new techniques of cutting and polishing stones that greatly increased their value to customers. Creating and applying traditional and unique gold settings, which turned stones into jewelry, also advanced as an art.

Gemstones had long been associated with symbolism and had various sorts of power attributed to them. Some of these ideas were Classical (especially from Pliny's *Natural History*), some biblical, and some from Islamic cultures. Worn as amulets, gems could absorb poisons, deflect curses or spells, prevent accidents, and block the evil eye. Because of their light catching and refracting qualities, gems were thought to have "sympathetic" ties to celestial bodies, especially stars. This meant that they could attract and absorb power from these bodies, and pass it on to the wearer or bearer. The hyacinth, for example, could block the plague, aid sleep, make one happier, and protect travelers. Topaz could help stop heavy

bleeding, anger, and melancholy. Sapphires were considered spiritually powerful, enhancing marital fidelity and personal piety; rubies had bodily qualities aiding the blood and good health, and counteracting lust. Emeralds protected eyesight and enhanced wealth and faithfulness, while coral warded off evil and prevented hemorrhaging. As seen in paintings and found in inventories, infants were often presented with coral, and it often found its way into women's trousseaux. Carving certain symbols into a gemstone could enhance its perceived power: an image of a serpent or scorpion made a stone even more effective against poisons. Some gems had come to be symbols of important virtues: the indestructability of the diamond or the purity of the white pearl.

Counterfeiting gems could allow profitable fraud or provide the means for making what we would call costume jewelry. Alchemists had a hand in some of this. Spinel was a crystalized compound of magnesium oxide and aluminum oxides that mimicked ruby but was rather softer. Some experimented with snail slime and glass powder. Glass or a glass-like paste could be colored and molded to appear gemlike. Rock crystal could imitate diamond, or other gems, if the piece's set sides were painted. Venetian and Milanese jewelers were known for enhancing small gems by gluing them to rock crystal, and small pearls could be dissolved and reconstituted as larger ones. The appearance of even real translucent gems could be made stronger by placing reflective foil behind the exposed face, or black behind a diamond.

Gems, real and fake, were sewn onto hats and other garments, glued onto small boxes, and set into jewelry. Earrings, hairclips, necklaces, gold chains, pendants, tiaras, pins, brooches, bracelets, and finger rings graced women's bodies, as countless period portraits attest. Rings, especially the wedding ring, probably carried the most symbolic value. Bishops wore rings, and the Doge of Venice annually tossed one into the Lagoon signifying the city's "marriage" to the sea. As "brides of Christ," nuns wore rings. A wealthy groom might present several rings to his young woman, some with stones, some without, some carved with a cupid, heart, or clasped hands similar to an Irish Claddagh ring. Some had inscriptions, such as Matthew 19:5 "and the two shall be one," or the two family crests, or the bride and groom's names. A wedding might be an occasion to recycle old family rings, as in 1496 when Maddalena Gualterotti received 13 rings, one from each of her new husband's relatives. He estimated their value to be 144 florins.

The value of gems and jewelry was important, as it was a significant part of many dowries, and thus of the woman's independent wealth. The trousseau of Pope Alexander VI's daughter Lucrezia Borgia contained 1,900 pearls and 300 gemstones, including diamonds and rubies. Husbands, when they died, were law and honor bound to return to their wives the full value of their trousseaux, or pass full value along to her designated heirs. These could be easily pawned when a family or widow needed cash, as even Spanish Queen Isabella is said to have done.

With This Ring. . .

Weddings with rings long predate the Renaissance era. During the Renaissance era bestowing the single ring was the final act in the wedding process. Poorer folks might have a simple circlet of gold, and patricians a heftier one clasping a diamond. The groom's "gift" obligated the bride's father or guardian to pay the dowry: no ring, no obligation. Anatomy taught the "ring finger" was one end of a vein that ended in the heart, considered a source of life, though not quite yet symbolic of love. Alchemy taught diamonds drew down solar protection from sickness, including plague.

Pearls were drilled and strung as necklaces or attached to gold hairnets. Being organic, they lose luster with age and were a poor long-term investment. Often a major component of a woman's trousseau and associated with purity, Venice banned the wearing of pearls by prostitutes or courtesans, who were not considered pure. In 1562 Venice forbade even "honest" women to wear them in their hair or on their breasts, and limited strands to one that only came to the top of the woman's skirt. A chain of sumptuary laws across Italy tried to restrict certain materials or jewelry types, though to little effect.

See also: *Arts*: Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Trade, Seaborne; *Family and Gender*: Dowries; Espousal and Wedding; *Fashion and Appearance*: Art, Fashion in; Court, Fashion at; Hair and Hairstyles; Sumptuary Laws; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Civic Festivals; Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Weddings; *Religion and Beliefs*: Magic; *Science and Technology*: Alchemy; Collecting and Collections

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HAIR AND HAIRSTYLES

Washing hair was a hygienic necessity. Body dirt and oils, and environmental dirt and dust-coated hair shafts made hair flat and dull. Dandruff and scabs accumulated and caused embarrassment when they fell on the shoulders of garments, especially black ones. A bigger problem was scalp parasites, many of which washing tended to keep down. Harder to control were body louse nits, which had to be killed or removed with a very strong solution or with tweezers—hence “nit picking.” A French book of 1605, translated into Italian, directed the assigned servant to place a cloth over her mistress’s shoulders and rub her scalp vigorously. Using a boxwood comb, she would then comb the hair backward from the scalp, untangling knots or tangles with her fingers. Combing was to be firm but gentle to avoid scratching or pulling out hairs. Combs were run through a large horse-tail hair tassel to clean them and stored in it to protect the teeth. Nuns, who cut their hair short, washed their hair once a month in winter and twice each month during the warm weather.

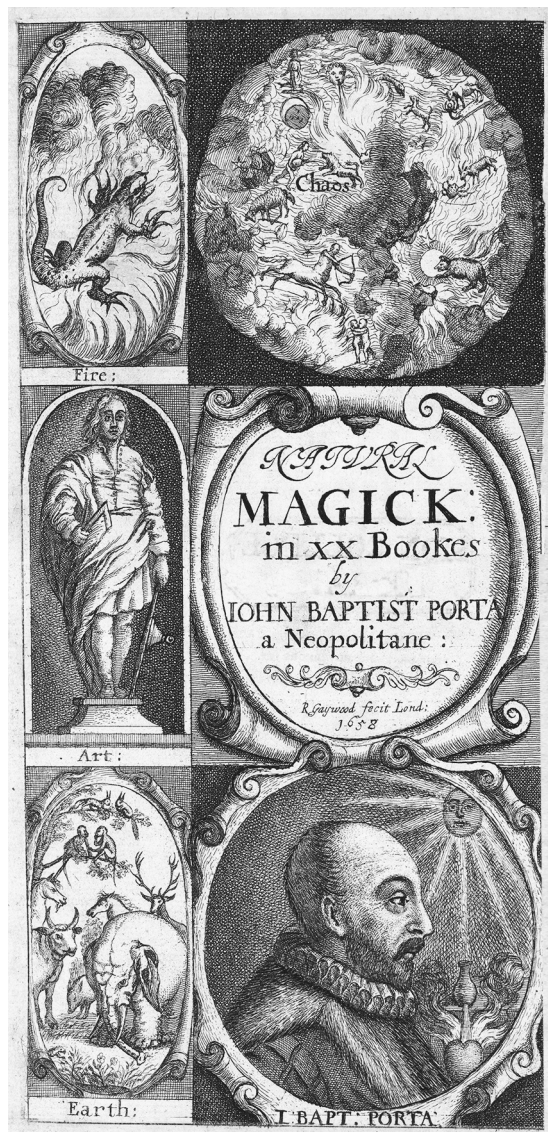
Changing the color of one’s hair was by no means universal, but demand for products and techniques for doing so was constant. As some men grayed, they sought darker dyes for their hair, brows, mustaches, and beards. Giovanni della Porta in his *Natural Magic* recommended a solution of silver froth, burnt brass, and lye, rinsing only after the solution had dried. Women with black hair also had it turn gray; for them Della Porta offered a dye of dead leeches left for 60 days in “the blackest wine.” Apparently this was a Classical recipe, since Pliny warned that unless a woman held olive oil in her mouth while dyeing her hair her teeth would also turn black.

Many women with dark hair sought to lighten it, moving toward red, gold, or even silver. In Venice and Naples they would wash their hair, apply a dye, and put on a round, wide-brimmed, straw hat without a crown. As they sat outside, their hair would be spread out around the brim, which also served to keep sun off of their faces and shoulders, which they desired to keep pale. A recipe for red hair dye uses walnut oil, white honey, burnt white tartar, and white wine mixed in a glazed pot along with burnt cumin, which was cooked to powder. Physician Giovanni Marinello gave several recipes, including a simple mix of white wine dregs and olive oil combed in while sunning. An alchemical product called for the distillation of white alum, cinnabar, and sulfur. More complex was a special concoction for brides preparing for their wedding days or new novices at the monastery: turmeric, saffron, rock alum, lemon juice, white wine, gum Arabic, centaury, ammonia, and urine. Expressed fears of using such concoctions and sitting for hours in the sun were not of damaging the hair or scalp, but of overheating the brain. Marinello suggested the application of cloves, musk, or ambergris after washing or dyeing to cool it.

Other products promised to remove hair (caustic lye) and to stiffen it for sculpting. Some fashions preferred a woman to display a high, hairless brow, which called for depilatories or equally painful plucking. On the other hand, some fashions demanded great towers of hair that required wigs or, more likely, hair extensions. As much as dyeing, addition of these was considered morally suspect for being deceptive and vain attempts to improve on what God gave one.

Women, aside from nuns, grew their hair long. What they did with it depended on the time period, the region, their class, and the occasion. It also depended on their marital status. Girls wore their hair loose before marriage, and in Venice for a year into the marriage. Married women usually wore their hair up and covered. In Florence that meant tightly bound and covered with a close-fitting cap for normal wear. In many places widows wore a long, opaque veil, so it was difficult to see their hair. Many braided their hair, so that piling it on the top and sides of the head was made easier. There were many kinds of hair coverings, from full veils to delicate silk hairnets, and every imaginable combination was used.

Many fashions left only the hair framing the face visible. As Cesare Vecellio shows in his great fashion catalogue from the 1590s, this hair was often curled or let fall



The title page of the 1658 English edition of Giovanni Della Porta's *Natural Magick*—a fine example of a Book of Secrets—featured alchemical symbols and the Neapolitan author's portrait (ca. 1535–1615). Available in reprint edition, it is a trove of “tested and proved” recipes for hair and cloth dyes, cosmetics, soaps and detergents, perfumes, mouthwashes, medicines, and other useful substances. (SSPL/Getty Images)

in ringlets. A very distinctive sixteenth-century style was called “horns,” and consisted of pulling hair up over each temple and using adhesive or pomade to stiffen it into two gracefully curved peaks. In the 1480s some Venetian women imitated a mushroom-shaped style, called *fongo*, worn by men. Maintaining gender differences was so important that Venetian women were banned from wearing the style; violating the law constituted sodomy, in this case a form of cross-dressing.

Florentine Fashion Trends c. 1530

Apothecary Luca Landucci died in 1516, but his diary was continued by an anonymous author: “In the year 1529 the custom of wearing hoods began to go out, and by 1532 not a single one was to be seen; caps or hats being worn instead. Also at this time, men began to cut their hair short, everyone having previously worn it long, onto their shoulders, without exception; and they now began to wear a beard, which formerly was only worn by two men in Florence, Corbizo and Martigli.”

Source: A Florentine Diary from 1450 to 1516 by Luca Landucci. Translated by Alice de Rosen Jervis. Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1971, p. 294.

Men’s styles varied greatly with time period and region as well. Adults tended to wear their hair short, while youth might wear it to their shoulders. Florentine paintings from the first half of the fifteenth century often show younger males with flowing hair, a style that returned to Florence in the early sixteenth century. In the 1490s the *zazzera* was popular: a bowl cut in front leaving bangs with the back tapering long from the ears. Older Florentines sometimes cropped their hair very short, echoing Classical Romans. Monks, friars, and other clerics wore tonsures, or circles of hair on the crown. On Florentine war galleys, Christian slaves were shaven bald, volunteer oarsmen were allowed a mustache, and Turkish prisoners were bald with a long tail lock. For men and women alike, hair had a language of its own.

See also: *Arts:* Portraits; *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; *Fashion and Appearance:* Cosmetics; Court, Fashion at; Facial Hair; Headgear; *Housing and Community:* Barbers and Surgeons; *Religion and Beliefs:* Monks and Monasteries; Nuns and Nunneries; *Science and Technology:* Secrets, Books of

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HEADGEAR

A person's face is the surest outward sign of his or her identity. Robbers covered their faces to hide their identity; maidens used face veils, lest men develop lust for them; widows shrouded their head and face in mourning and humility; and Carnival revelers disguised their faces to make a game of ascertaining one's identity. While some did, most Renaissance-era headgear did not obscure the face; rather it added a layer to one's identity. Many forms were a matter of fashion, others of idiosyncratic choice, and a few unique, such as the Venetian doge's corno or the pope's triple tiara. In battle, helmets protected the head from blows; in sun-drenched fields wide-brimmed straw hats protected peasants' heads; fur-lined caps kept heads warm; and as part of livery, a color and style of men's cap identified one's employer and perhaps political faction. Distinctive hats identified foreigners, whether other Italians, Greeks, Turks, Germans, or others. Perhaps because during colder months or at night northern Italians often covered their equally status-declaring clothing with great capes or cloaks, hats often had to do the speaking.

As with clothing, certain styles, colors, and materials could only be worn by specific civic or ducal officials or clergy. When greeting a social equal, a man raised his hat slightly in recognition or greeting. To indicate one appreciated a woman's beauty one did likewise. In Florence, grabbing another's headpiece in the street was a come-on for sex. Prostitutes did this to encourage customers as did older men seeking sex with boys. The disgrace of having one's hat knocked off was only balanced by engaging in sex. In Milan the penalty was merely 5 lire.

Within a given city at a given time there was on display a great variety of types of headgear and many kinds of craftspeople who made them. Women at home, in convents, or in charitable institutions knitted caps of rough wool yarn and sewed simple single-piece woolen caps (*cuffie*) for peasants and laborers. Sleeping caps were fashioned of light, easily washable, and inexpensive linen. Other women crafted woolen scarves for the heads and necks of men and women of all classes, and simple head cloths known as *bende*. Some women were noted as experts in crafting the latest fashions in women's hats, working with whatever materials the customer brought with her. These could include silks, veils, feathers, gemstones, willow twigs, wire, cork, fur, cameos, garlanding materials, ribbons, and tinsel.

Male hatmakers typically belonged to guilds. Verona had one for hatmakers from 1486. In 1502 it registered 77 members, but by 1545 it had grown to 291; in 1605 it counted only 75. Florentine guild members were differentiated by materials and whether they made or sold the products. There were wool beret and hatmakers; sellers of berets and hats of imported materials; straw and felt hatmakers; cap, cowl, and bonnet makers; used clothing dealers; and silk veil makers. Draper's shops sold woolen and leather caps, and caps lined with silk. Florence's Por Santa Maria silk guild imported fancier hats from Germany and France. Inexpensive caps and imported berets were sold by the dozen. Noble courts had hatmakers on retainer, and, like court tailors, if a trend changed they might have to create scores of a new design in a very short period. One may be certain that when Lucrezia Borgia arrived from Rome at her new home in 1502 with 22 headresses, the orders rolled in.

Fads in both men's and women's headgear came and went. Many of these were recorded by the painters of the day, in portraits and especially in smaller, incidental figures. Foreign styles, such as larger hats with floppy brims from Burgundy and France, were popular in the fourteenth century. Mid-fifteenth-century Italian women sported "horns" from the same source. A tight cap kept two cones jutting from above the temples, and these were then carefully veiled in a light material. During the early Renaissance era women also took to wearing "crowns" of gold or gilded silver atop heads piled with hair. These could have high sides, like a queen's, or be mere shining rings like duchesses wore. Sumptuary laws and fashion eventually banned these.

Throughout the era women wore long hair put up on their heads, so many coverings were based on a net of silk or gold thread, often decorated with drilled pearls. From this they might build up further elements, including veils of light fabric in

The Impresa

Imprese were small visual or textual/visual messages worn by elites in their headgear that, like modern bumper stickers, T-shirts, or lapel pins, revealed the wearer's values, aspirations, ideals, or attitude to life. Descended from medieval heraldic symbols and popularized in the sixteenth century, they might feature animals, plants, lightning, fire, contemporary or Classical human figures accompanied by proverb-like texts in banners. Suggestions of overcoming adversity, having special insights, or noble character traits were common. The symbolism had to be decipherable but subtle, and several large collections of these appeared in print.

part representing their marital status. Hair might also be piled up or sculpted with stiff wire forms or combs of ivory, bone, or expensive wood. Round garlands were made of wire mesh on a ring of cork, or just a donut of wire, covered in expensive cloth and decorated with all manner of chains, flowers, tinsel, and feathers. Garlands suited brides for a time, but it would have been difficult to outdo Caterina Strozzi's 1447 bridal garland of 800 peacock feathers woven together.

Men's fashionable headgear went through just as many phases. Older men of means wore hats of fancier materials but simple cuts, while younger men, presumably unmarried, strutted about in more elaborate hats meant to get attention. Perhaps the quintessential male hat was popular during the first Medici period in Florence. The *capuccio* was a round heavy roll of expensive cloth that sat on the head like a crown. The top was covered, but one or two floor-length strips dropped down, to be tucked in, piled on top, or let hang as the fashion, or the owner, dictated.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Courtly; Daily Life in Art; Non-Europeans in Art; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Guilds; Women in the Labor Force; *Family*: Servants, Household; Widows; *Fashion and Appearance*: Art, Fashion in; Attire, Children; Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Court, Fashion at; Gems and Jewelry; Hair and Hairstyles; Religious Habits and Vestments; Social Status and Clothing; *Housing and Community*: Foreign Communities; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; Soldiers; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade

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Hygiene. *See* Bathing and Personal Hygiene

Jewelry. *See* Gems and Jewelry

LAUNDRY

Clothes got dirty: really dirty. External surfaces collected food, grease, beverage stains, manure, mud, dust, rust, soil, smoke, drool, blood, pollen, ink, paint, and whitewash. Internal surfaces picked up sweat, body oils, feces, parasites, urine, blood, semen, musk, mildew, bacteria, dander, medicinal creams, and other matter. Odors clung to clothing from smoke, animals, food and stains, incense, burning oil lamps, applied scents, human waste products, and other articles of clothing. Some clothes got dirtier than others. Those of peasants, butchers, soldiers, shepherds, fishermen and fishmongers, construction workers, ditch diggers, surgeons, and midwives were no doubt filthier than those of a lawyer, priest, or courtier. But, since no one bathed completely more than a few times per year, and never during winter, the toll on clothing was considerable. Other cloth objects also became soiled: curtains and other hangings, handkerchiefs, towels, table covers, bed linens, napkins, cleaning cloths, mattress sacks, diapers, soft shoes, altar linens, and dust rags. Even in well-off homes cloth was prized and recycled through laundering whenever possible, though whenever possible was usually not very often. The well-off valued personal cleanliness and usually had servants see that at least outer garments were soil and stain-free. Nuns were known to launder their habits only twice or three times in a year; while peasant and working class people had few clothes that they washed even less frequently.

Laundry was women's work. Among the religious, monks and priests sent theirs to a local nunnery, while soldiers might pay a prostitute or other female camp follower a few *quattrini* to freshen their clothing between battles. Among common folk, wives or daughters did the job, while servant girls, slaves, or fostered girls did so in wealthier houses. Poorer rural women also took in laundry from city folk who prized the cleaner water of the countryside. Cities did have women who routinely cleaned other people's clothes and cloth goods. These laundresses could be otherwise unskilled nuns, widows in need of income, unmarried but independent girls, current or former prostitutes, and poorer wives who needed to supplement their families' income. Rome's 1527 census listed 70 among its population of 55,000.

At its most basic, women carried the dirty materials in wicker baskets to the bank of the nearest creek or river. A suitable flat rock constituted the traditional workspace on which the rinsed laundry was squeezed, rubbed, and pounded to urge fibers to release their filth. Even the poorest woman might have a traditional remedy, such as soapwort for blood or wine stains. After a final rinse and hand-wringing the pieces were stretched out to dry in the sun. They would then be folded and carried back home. Women were wise not to work alone, as companions provided both company and some protection from predators.

Where running water was not readily available, or in enclosed urban spaces such as palazzi or nunneries, a basin or tub was used. Water came from a well or was delivered by servants or paid water-carriers. Laundry was first soaked and then a detergent added. The mass was agitated with a wooden paddle since the lye-based soap was very hard on human flesh. More water was brought to rinse, after which hand-wringing and more rinsing and wringing followed. A period woodcut shows two women on opposite sides of a basin with a long board reaching between them. The board apparently substituted for the flat rock on the riverbank. The wet material was laid out or hung to dry before being folded and returned. A related technique used fire-heated water into which the laundry and an ash-based mixture were agitated. Each piece was then examined and scrubbed with a brush or treated with an ammonia-based spot-remover. A couple of rinses prepared it for drying. In Rome, for the “annual wash” women first boiled laundry in an ash or soda bath and then took the damp mass to the Tiber’s edge to be beaten and rinsed.

Clearly the more fresh water one could use the better, so laundering streamside had the best effect. Aside from inconvenience, however, were dangers of molestation, slipping and drowning, trench-foot from routinely standing for hours in swampy water, malaria-carrying mosquitoes, and kneeling or stooping on the flat stone. River or stream water was also notoriously filthy, especially downstream of sewer outlets, butchers, tanners, or water mills that churned the river bottom. Classical Rome and cities such as Perugia had had fresh water gushing into fountains and basins from aqueducts. With the rebuilding and reactivation of three of Rome’s aqueducts from the 1580s, fresh, clean water gushed into fountains and basins, a few of which were set aside specifically for use of laundresses. Early “wash-houses” used ground water, and were thus out of the way, underground,

The Happy Laundry

In 1588, Pope Sixtus V established a public laundry facility atop Rome’s quiet and fairly exclusive Quirinal Hill. Fed by the Acqua Felice aqueduct and named for the pope—Felice (Happy) Peretti—“Happy” Laundry included a basin with running water, drain, and space within which to dry wet laundry, within a huge enclosed courtyard 65 x 56 meters in size. It was probably meant for the use of professional laundresses, for whom Sixtus had established a special confraternity and chapel. Nearby nuns soon complained that it had become a noisy and rowdy nuisance, and it was shut down.

dirty, and dangerous, and without adequate open space to dry laundry. Some monasteries and nunneries rented or leased protected facilities, and civic wash-houses operated as businesses that professional laundresses utilized. Servants and housewives could now use open, aqueduct-fed basins dedicated to laundry. These are still distinguished by their low parapet, or steps or a platform on the side, which allowed easy access to the water.

Paintings and prints, especially Venetian cityscapes, sometimes depict tiny washwomen along the riverbank in the distance, kneeling on the flat rock or knee-deep in water. More common are images of houses with horizontal drying poles on brackets beneath upper windows or supported by vertical poles on rooftops of distant palazzi. They either support or await the family's damp laundry.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work*: Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Widows; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Bathing and Personal Hygiene; *Housing and Community*: Water; *Religion and Beliefs*: Nuns and Nunneries

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LITERATURE ON DRESS

Throughout the Renaissance era people wrote about the clothing they saw, wore, and wanted. Domestic letters discussed laundry, the changing seasons, and children's needs. Inventories listed items in shops and in people's homes. Memoires mentioned fads or trends; trousseau inventories listed the garments accompanying the new bride; and accounts of weddings, state banquets, and jousting tournaments breathlessly recounted the ensembles that stood out or that the major characters had donned. Sixteenth-century prescriptive works, such as Giovanni Della Casa's *Galateo* or *The Courtier* by Baldassare Castiglione, include dress among other elements of socially acceptable behavior. But none of

these valuable sources deals specifically with clothing. Despite the importance of dress and appearance in general to Italians, literature on the subject was late in coming.

The invention of the printing press made possible the publication of relatively inexpensive illustrated texts. The miniaturist, who decorated books with tiny, beautifully colored and detailed paintings, was only able to create one image at a time, and each at great expense. Though hand-painted manuscripts and some printed books were sold during the sixteenth century, the artistry of printmakers was moving from strength to strength. Their easily reproducible images could be placed adjacent to appropriate text, and these books sold at a fraction of what manually decorated texts cost. For a subject such as dress, this was a great advantage over mere pictures or mere text. Each form of communication enlightened the other, clarifying what one read and viewed.

Most costume books fell into one of three categories. One was pattern books, which went heavy on the illustrations, some of which were life-sized. A good example was the embroidery or lace patterns books. Someone using the name Zoppino (perhaps ironically from *zoppo*, “shaky”) published ten of these during the 1530s, and others followed. As with modern sewing patterns, his designs were meant to be perforated and then pounced with a dark or light powder that penetrated the holes and transferred the pattern to the surface. This was a technique of design transfer that had long been used by fresco painters. Women at home or commercial embroiderers or lace-makers would have found this very useful. From the earliest known Italian work in 1527 to 1600, 190 titles appeared, often dedicated to important women. Clearly this was a popular and well-selling product, and for two good reasons. One was the quickly moving face of Italian fashion that demanded periodic radical changes; the other was that neither man nor woman wanted to see his or her latest decoration or fringe on a neighbor or court rival. In 1554 a more text-oriented work appeared, compiled by Mathio Pagan of Venice. The title of *The Glory and Honor of Bobbin and Needle Lace* perhaps played to its readers’ vanity, as did Cesare Vecellio’s later lace book, *Crown of the Noble and Virtuous Women*.

A second category was what might be called a tailor’s sample book. An example that has been recently printed—the original is a manuscript—is the anonymous *Book of the Tailor*. It was apparently compiled by two or three Milanese tailors during the 1580s and published in Venice. Fashions reflect the period from the 1540s to the 1570s. Illustrations were hand painted in watercolors and annotated as might be a modern catalogue. This seems to have been the purpose: a potential customer could choose the cut and assembly from the work’s pages. There is no doubt that tailors, whether in shops or at court, kept drawings of a great many works they

had created or imagined or seen, but this put it all on one place. Other such works existed for the use of tailors, some depicting the full garment, and others details of sleeves or collars complete with stitches.

The third type of work was the costume book, usually including foreign dress as well as Italian. From 1545 the Venetian engraver Enea Vico was at the forefront in creating reproducible images of familiar and exotic costumes. From 1563, numerous editions of these catalogues came off the presses to meet a demand fueled by European expansion, far-flung trade, and an interest in understanding humanity around the world. One problem with reproducibility, however, was that plates could be used and reused, even for different works. So, what is a Croatian matron in one work might be an Irish widow in another. The first Italian work was Ferdinando Bertelli's *Clothing of All Peoples of Our Time*, published in Venice in 1563. His son Pietro extended the single-volume work to three volumes and provided a balance of male and female subjects. His *Clothing of Diverse Peoples* appeared in 1589. Meanwhile, Hans Weigel of Nuremberg in Germany published his famous *Trachtenbuch* in 1577, setting a new technical standard. From Rome, Bartolommeo Grassi responded with *Some True Portraits of the Costume of All Parts of the World* in 1585. The most famous of these was by Cesare Vecellio, a nephew of the Venetian painter Titian. His *Ancient and Modern Costumes of the World* was published in Venice in 1590 and expanded in 1598. A brisk text accompanies each image, fanciful as many of them are.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender*: *Virtù* and Honor; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Court, Fashion at; Social Status and Clothing; Tailors and Seamstresses

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LIVERY

On the walls of the famous Camera degli Sposi in Mantua's Palace one finds frescoes of life in the ducal court of the 1470s. The duke relaxes in a long gown with his family, a message in his hand, while servants come and go. The male help is all dressed similarly, though colors differ. Mid-thigh-length pleated long-sleeved tunics with white hems come in three colors, which are coordinated with hose of all white, all red, or one leg white and the other rose. Each wears soft shoes that match his hose, and several carry gloves that match their tunics. Tunics are belted, and a short sword or long knife hangs from that of one arrogant—watchful?—looking fellow. All—including the duke—wear fashionable red hats of cylindrical shape with larger flat tops, except the rather older-looking messenger who approaches the duke with his hat in hand to announce the approach of the duke's son. On the adjoining wall the young cardinal arrives from Rome and is greeted by his father, who has exchanged his gown for caped short tunic of silver brocade and white hose and shoes. His hat matches his tunic, from the belt of which hangs a ceremonial short sword. The duke's formal dress echoes that of his servants while outdoing it in



Between 1465 and 1474, Andrea Mantegna (1431–1506) frescoed the so-called Camera degli Sposi for Mantua's Duke Ludovico III Gonzaga (r. 1444–1478). Here, the duke and his wife, Barbara of Brandenburg, relax amid servants and courtiers in livery that both signals their Gonzaga connections and marks their status in the pecking order. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

material richness. The painter, famed artist Andrea Mantegna, knew court uniforms well since he wore one every day of his 22 years of service to the Gonzaga duke.

A similar artistic display of uniform servile dress is that of the entourages of the Three Kings (or Magi) in Benozzo Gozzoli's famous depiction of the winding procession in the chapel of the Palazzo Medici in Florence, from about 1460. The elegant attire of each king sets the tone for the livery of his followers, perhaps reflecting actual fashions worn by the Medici household.

Livery is coordinated clothing and accessories worn by members of a distinctive, usually servile, group of men. To ensure uniformity lords provided the tailors' services and fabrics, which could be quite rich. Variations within a tight theme, as at Mantua, signaled differences in status or function. The adoption of livery at royal courts is usually dated to the 1380 accession of French king Charles VI. Each male at court from the king down wore the same colors and badges, which were changed once a year by the king in his council. Materials, cut, and other decorations depended on one's rank.

In Italy, as early as the fourteenth century, noble households furnished recognizable uniforms to servants or retainers, and these were mimicked further down the social ladder by young men associated with specific guilds, neighborhoods, or even gangs. For special events colored tunics distinguished the city's quarters: Sant'Angelo's youth wore red, San Sanne's donned sky blue set off by silver chains, San Fiorenzo designated white with rose stripes, and Porta Borgne all green silk. These choices probably had their origins in the colors dominating the quarters' identifying banners, or *gonfalon*i. On days dedicated to local religious festivals the quarters' women sported similarly colored clothing. Even for a sport as brutal as Florentine calcio, a form of rugby, a match without the teams' livery was considered just practice.

Traditionally, Catholic religious orders, such as the Benedictines and Dominicans, wore distinctive dress—habits—that distinguished their members. Though never considered livery, these servants of God took their habits very seriously. Following suit, confraternity members often adopted uniform attire for processions and other formal events. In Rome the household members of cardinals, visiting dignitaries, and local nobility were recognizable by their costumes, which may have caused some liveried thugs to think twice before engaging in illegal or violent acts. Notables could be identified by their liveried entourages, and those of rival masters found willing opponents for displays of bravado in confrontations ranging from minor scuffles to bloody street battles. The famed papal force known as the Swiss Guard still wears an immediately recognizable sixteenth-century uniform or livery. Its design was long (and incorrectly) attributed to Michelangelo, who worked for the popes at about the time they adopted it. Such standardization of military attire led eventually to the development of military uniforms. The later sixteenth century, with rising costs of living and trends toward simplicity fueled

by Catholic Reformers and the Council of Trent, saw not only more Roman sumptuary laws demanding reductions in superfluous expenditures but real also reductions in luxuries and display. As early as 1565 a Venetian envoy to Rome noted the cardinals' reductions in lavish banquets, parties, and fancy liveries.

Livery for Dance

Bartolomeo Del Corazza describes a noble Florentine group's livery for a Carnival dance in 1419: They wore "cloth the color of peach blossom, which reached down to just below the knee; with blown-up sleeves, the left sleeve embroidered with pearls, that is, an arm that came out of a little cloud and threw flowers down the left arm. The shoes were of the same cloth, except that the left was half red, and a branch of flowers of pearls was woven into it."

Source: Trexler, Richard. *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980, p. 236.

Venetians, too, prized well-dressed servants and chafed under sumptuary laws. Private gondoliers wore household colors, and even licensed public gondoliers had a distinctive uniform: long-sleeved shirt beneath a long sleeveless jacket belted at the waist, baggy pants, hose from the knees down, and a brimmed hat. Female servants of the later sixteenth century also wore recognizable clothing prescribed by Venetian authorities. Chambermaids dressed in dark serge dresses with a silk kerchief over their heads and shoulders; maids wore a black outfit with a kerchief; those who cooked or cleaned could wear a colored skirt, white or tan smock, topped by a white kerchief. Wealthy householders flaunted their resources by providing livery made of silks, velvets, or even brocade. In 1541 the state banned the wearing of silk clothing or shoes by servants, and in 1562 expanded the list of forbidden materials. Laws did, however, make exceptions for new outfits for special occasions such as household weddings. And, of course, laws were made to be broken.

See also: *Arts:* Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work:* Guilds; *Family and Gender:* Servants, Household; *Fashion and Appearance:* Religious Habits and Vestments; *Sumptuary Laws;* *Recreation and Social Customs:* Sports, Contests, and Competitions

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MOUTH AND TEETH

Since the mouth was directly connected to the lungs and the anus, it was considered a major exiting point for exhalations from the stomach, brain, female genitals, and lungs. It is also the chief organ for communicating with others. At meals one eats with the mouth, in intimacy one kisses with it, and one expresses joy by smiling with it. Its health and hygiene were important to Renaissance-era Italians, who took pains to maintain sweet breath, white teeth, and strong gums, often unsuccessfully. Lack of certain vitamins led to scurvy and gum disease; the use of mercury in preparations for hair and syphilis and ever greater use of sugar undermined good oral health.

Halitosis, or bad breath, has several causes, including stomach gases and unhealthy bacteria on the teeth, tongue, and oral cavity. It was an aesthetic problem, but also a sign of corruption and sickness. When not exhaled, the next stop was the brain. In the *Decameron*, the character Pasquino prepares himself for a bit of passion by rubbing his teeth and gums with a sage leaf. Hygiene manuals suggested the use of a coarse cloth on the teeth and gums each morning, or other aromatic leaves or woods. Of course, people used toothpicks to remove food from between teeth, and for a while they became a fetish item. Usually fashioned from bone or wood, gold toothpicks were decorated with pearls, hung around the neck on delicate gold chains, and used ostentatiously at table. By about 1550 the fad had died down and was declared low class; good oral hygiene returned to the shadows. Breath might be sweetened by swirling wine in the mouth, chewing mint or other aromatic leaves, or rinsing with a specially prepared alcohol-based wash.

Dentifrices were tooth-polishing abrasives available from apothecaries, barbers, or charlatans, or made at home. Books of Secrets usually contained multiple recipes of varying reasonableness. Neapolitan Giovanni Battista della Porta in his *Natural Magic* deplored women with ragged, rusty, and spotted teeth. He blamed their use of mercury sublimate and exposure to the sun while bleaching their hair. He suggested tooth powders made of crushed shells, burned ivory, or pumice, rinsed with fresh spring water. He also recommended a mix of burned barley bread crumbs mixed with salt and honey; crushed coral, hart's horn, "and the like;" or a solution of alum and salt, distilled.

Barbers and barber-surgeons treated not only hair but also all aspects of head care, including the mouth. They scraped the tongue and rubbed the teeth, occasionally pulling out a particularly offensive one. They, and recipe books, recommended painkillers containing opium, willow tree bark, or alcohol for troublesome teeth. Besides being smelly and stained, teeth also grew in weird directions, chipped, rotted with cavities, abscessed, and eventually fell out. There were no dentists, but oral care was clearly a matter for surgeons or empirics and not physicians. Tooth-pullers

or tooth specialists were medical empirics who had trained as apprentices. They could extract rotten teeth, drain abscesses, carve or hand drill away decayed areas, sometimes reroot healthy teeth that had been knocked out, as well as clean and whiten teeth. High-quality artificial teeth appeared in the sixteenth century. They were carefully carved from animal bone, ivory, or agates and set in place with thin gold wires. Human teeth from uncertain sources were also wired together and in place. Jewelers and goldsmiths rather than empirics were more likely to create these objects and perform these services.

Living took its toll on the mouth. It acquired sores, lost teeth, and had the soft tissue of the gums recede. For many, one of the worst ravages of old age was the lack of teeth. Not only was one severely limited in what one could eat, but simple speech became all but impossible. Aesthetically, the mouth puckered around the gums, unrestrained by teeth, and smiling became gruesome in the culture's eyes rather than alluring or reassuring. Yet even mere self-consciousness about intact teeth may help explain why teeth so rarely appear in the era's portraits.

See also: *Arts*: Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; *Family and Gender*: Old Age; *Fashion and Appearance*: Bathing and Personal Hygiene; Cosmetics; Gems and Jewelry; *Food and Drink*: Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices; Sugar and Confectioned Sweets; *Housing and Community*: Barbers and Surgeons; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Science and Technology*: Secrets, Books of; Surgery

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Perfumes. See Scents and Perfumes

RELIGIOUS HABITS AND VESTMENTS

Catholic clergy (deacons, priests, bishops, cardinals, popes) and regular religious (monks, nuns, non-ordained friars) in Renaissance-era Italy wore distinctive clothing that distinguished them from the laity. Since there were many different groups of these people, everyday clothing, or habits, also provided a kind of uniform that was

distinctive for each group. During official functions, such as processions or Mass, a priest and deacon wore vestments (*vestire*, “to dress”) particular to the occasion.

With few exceptions, monastic orders in Italy derived from the sixth-century Order of St. Benedict (OSB). In his *Rule*, Benedict ordered his followers to adopt a simple hooded wool robe cinched with a leather belt. Sandals protected the feet and in cold weather or climate a rough cloak the body. Eventually robes were to be black, which required dyeing. Since there were both Benedictine monks and nuns, they wore essentially the same ensemble, though nuns kept their hair short and covered with a veil as did married women. Offshoots of the order sprang up occasionally, usually as reform movements seeking a return to purity of obedience to the *Rule*. Many of these chose the same hooded robe and belt, but adopted a different color. Cistercians chose the simplicity of unbleached and undyed wool, leaving their habits a range of shades from white to light gray. Carthusians, on the other hand, an order to which Petrarch’s brother belonged, wore bleached white wool with a distinctive scapular draped over the shoulder down front and back. Women’s orders that followed a male offshoot usually adopted the same color as their male counterparts.

The thirteenth century spawned the mendicant orders. The two largest orders were those of St. Francis (Franciscans, Order of Little Brothers or OFM) and St. Dominic (Dominicans, Order of Preachers or OP). Because they worked actively among the people it was important that they be distinctive in dress, though they adopted the basic monastic garb. Francis himself lived a very ascetic life, and two of his robes remain on display in churches. Franciscan color was earthy, running between gray and brown with waist cinched with a rope belt. His preference was for bare feet, but sandals soon became typical among his followers. During the Renaissance era the order in Italy adopted a dark reddish-brown known as *monachino*. Dominic chose white, topped with a black cape or black veil for nuns. As with many things religious the difference between orders reflected a symbolic difference. Franciscans were to engage the simple people on their terms, validate nature by rugged simplicity, and shame the wealthy by their poverty. Dominicans’ gleaming white set them above the crowd like a beacon when they preached; physical cleanliness was a mark of spiritual purity. Dominicans became important tools of the Inquisition, rooting out heresy. Their black and white garb reminded people of black and white Dalmatian dogs, and Domini-cane translates “hound of the Lord.”

Any monk or friar could be ordained a priest by a bishop, and many friars were. This was important to religious groups that worked in society because without ordination they could not say Mass, hear confessions, baptize, or give last rites to the dying. Most priests did not belong to an order, but were under the authority of the bishop who had ordained them. Most stayed in the diocese, or administrative district, in which they were ordained, and were thus diocesan priests. Church authorities in Rome had long dictated that the simple button up the front cassock (*zimarra*), or

long-sleeved black robe, be the basic habit. Higher Church officials such as bishops or cardinals added skull caps and distinctive colored piping and a shoulder-covering cope to the black cassock for daily wear. When saying Mass any priest was expected to don a number of special vestments. The amice was a short cape with two long cords that went around the body and tied in front. Over this came the white alb, a loose, long-sleeved tunic of silk or linen. A stole went over the shoulders and hung down both sides of the chest, held in place with a silk belt. Over everything went as ostentatious a chasuble as the local church or priest could afford. This was essentially a silk poncho that hung to about knee length in front and back. The color of the chasuble reflected the importance of the day on the Church calendar: green was a common day, red signified a martyr's commemoration, and white a high feast such as Easter. Surviving examples are stunning works of brocade or velvet with embroidery or other fine needlework. A presiding bishop would add such pieces as a cope, or short cape, gloves, a ring, skull cap (*zucchetto*), and tall, pointed bishop's miter. The pope, as a bishop, would be similarly outfitted. Each element of a priest's vestments had a specific symbolism, and theologian St. Thomas Aquinas defended the elaborateness by stressing the nobility of the priest's office and grandeur of the Mass. For rituals other than Mass an alb or a short white tunic known as a surplice would be topped with a stole. Deacons who served at Mass wore a dalmatic, a long, collarless tunic with square sleeves and a stole. These two might be made of silken materials.

Bishops could be concerned with clothing. Florence's fifteenth-century Dominican archbishop Antoninus legislated against habits that were too long, too short, worn open in front, made of silk, worn with secular clothing, or decorated with fur or jewels. Contrarily, Milan's noble Archbishop Ippolito d'Este, who turned 26 in 1535, owned 400 clothing items, of which only 43 were clerical. Sixty-one related to hunting, Carnival, or jousting.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Sacred; Daily Life in Art; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Fabrics, Domestic; Fabrics, Imported; Hair and Hairstyles; Shoes and Footwear; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; *Religion and Beliefs*: Clergy, Catholic; Friars; Monks and Monasteries; Nuns and Nunneries; Sacraments, Catholic

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SCENTS AND PERFUMES

Odors played many roles in Renaissance-era Italian culture. Frankincense granules placed on hot charcoal in a censer at church sent billowing clouds of sweet smoke heavenward, representing the prayers of the congregants. The priest took the same smoldering censer through the church as a kind of cleansing ritual, blessing those present. One sign of a dead person's sanctity was that rather than the smell of rotting flesh, when the body was disturbed it gave off a sweet, flower-like smell. In a house, residents burned aromatic substances in perfume burners, which acted like small censers. For guests, flowers or herbs were strewn on the floor. To conceive a boy, the copulating couple were to burn "warm" substances; "cool" ones would help engender a girl. Unpleasant smells indicated the presence of something unpleasant. Human and animal waste and rotting organic materials gave off not only stench, but, it was believed, also poisoned the air in a way that caused plague. The connection among corruption, stench, and disease made some sense given the medical understanding of the period, and this sparked most of the earliest attempts at public sanitation for public health.

Combatting disease-spawning stink meant removing the source in rotting corpses or open cesspits, but it also meant cleansing the affected air. Here opinions differed. Some insisted that only "good" and "sweet" odors should be used; others emphasized that like substances counteracted like, and that only nasty smells could counteract stink-spawned disease. Fumigation (*fumare*, to smoke) became common during epidemics. Bonfires burned in streets and braziers in rooms, incinerating any burnable aromatic material available, especially strong herbs and woods such as juniper and pine. Household goods, especially clothing and linens, were hung above fires, and even the smoke of discharged gunpowder was used to fumigate small objects. On a personal level, people smoked tobacco and sought to alter the air around them with sachets of herbs and flowers or scent balls of aromatic musk, civet, or ambergris worn around the neck or on belts in ventilated gold locketts.

The use of personal scent probably entered medieval Europe with the Crusades. The human body's odors are complex, including both sexually attracting pheromones and less pleasant bacterial byproducts. Clothes absorb these as well as environmental smells. Bathing and laundering were ways of removing odors and their sources, but neither was done frequently. Both processes could also introduce new and pleasant scents to skin, hair, and clothing, as soap, shampoo, and detergents do today. Media for scent were many. Animal byproducts included musk, civet, and ambergris, which is a waxy sperm-whale cast-off available from Spain and Portugal. Civet derived from scent glands of the civet cat, and musk deer from Tibet provided musk oil, which was shipped through Islamic lands. Water could be aromatized and produce a light effect, as with popular rosewater.

Botanical gums, such as Traganth and Arabic, and resins held scents well, and could be molded or shaped. In his *Natural Magic*, whose Chapter 11 deals with “Perfuming,” Neapolitan naturalist Giovanni della Porta wrote that all scents require a “greasy body,” and he suggested several types of oils, including almond and a Genoese mixture he calls oil of Ben or Benjamin. This included civet, musk, and amber set in the sun for 20 days to blend naturally. Because of the importance and widespread use of scents, many so-called Books of Secrets, like Della Porta’s, contained numerous odoriferous recipes; his book has 27. In 1555, an officer at the Venetian shipyard, Giovanventura Rosetti, published *Most Notable Secrets of the Art of Perfume Making*. This was the first book dedicated entirely to a branch of cosmetics. He had traveled widely, especially in the Near East, and collected recipes. He tells readers that he published the work to help establish the craft of scent-making in Venice.

Scent was applied directly to the body in soap, powders, dabbed unguents and oils, or atomized waters. It was worn on the body as fresh flowers, herb-filled sachets, pomanders or molded scent balls, jewelry such as beaded necklaces and earrings, and peculiarly Italian glass casting bottles which were filled with essential floral oil and worn around one’s neck. These last were popular gifts, and their intimacy made them love tokens. But many other items received a sweet scent. Bed linens and towels were routinely sprinkled with rosewater or another floral water. The same was true of handkerchiefs, fans, underclothing, and other articles of clothing. Sachets went into storage chests, and small toilette boxes were decorated with scented moldings. New leather was especially foul smelling, and articles made from it, such as shoes, belts, purses, and gloves, were routinely treated. Della Porta recommended rubbing them with unscented oil, such as Oil of Ben or Oil of Eggs (which he described), and then laying fresh flowers on them for several days. The oil absorbs the flowers’ essence as it is taken into the leather.

Pomanders for Plague

“Apples of ambergris” appeared in the thirteenth century as portable scent containers. By the sixteenth century these small metal spheres were composed of four to eight perforated, orange-slice shaped compartments that opened out from the core. Each carried an ambergris lump or other aromatic material such as civet or musk, or a small sponge soaked in pungent liquid. Men wore them from the belt, as did women, who also suspended them from the neck. Perfume vendors, apothecaries, and goldsmiths sold these as prophylactics against plague and other diseases, since belief was that the odor purified plague-tainted air.

Materials for making one's own scented materials were readily available from urban apothecaries. Some ingredients, such as ambergris, and musk and civet oil, were expensive imports. Some apothecaries made their own proprietary scents, while commercial perfumers and perfume shops appeared in Milan and Florence—at least—before the sixteenth century. In Venice, perfumers belonged to the mercer's guild, and sought their own, the *muschieri*, in 1551. A branch of alchemical practice, especially prized by women, worked with scents through distillation and other experimental practices. Duchess Isabella d'Este was known for her laboratory-made perfumes, which she gave away as gifts.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; Imported Goods, Sources of; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; Bathing and Personal Hygiene; Hair and Hairstyles; Laundry; Underclothing; *Food and Drink*: Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices; *Housing and Community*: Barbers and Surgeons; Furnishing the House; Plague; Sewage, Sewerage, and Public Sanitation; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; *Science and Technology*: Alchemy; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Secrets, Books of

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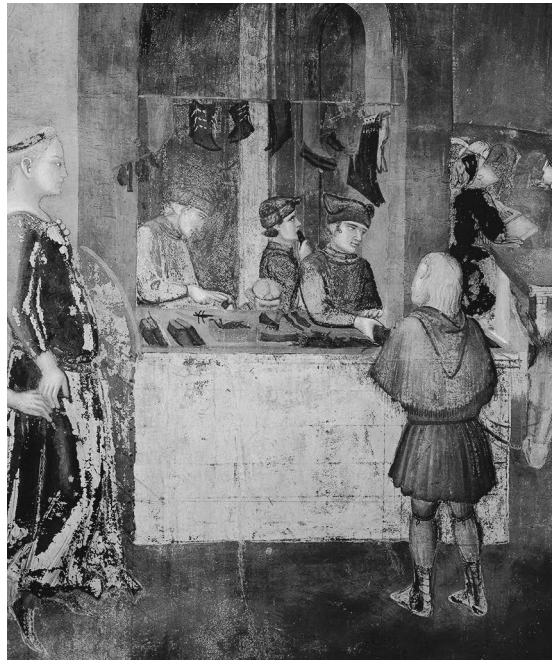
SHOES AND FOOTWEAR

As with all other elements of Renaissance-era fashion, footwear had utilitarian, aesthetic, and symbolic elements. In the Vatican's audience room, the pope wore slippers, his guards wore heavy boots, his cardinals wore comfortable soft-soled cloth shoes, and the radical Franciscan preaching to them wore no shoes at all. Unlike many parts of the wardrobe, shoes were often covered by long gowns, robes, cassocks, dresses, or cloaks, and paintings rarely privilege the sitter's feet.

Shoes were one clothing item that was not likely to have been made at home or by local women. Florence had a shoemaker's guild, which was among the minor ones. There were more shoemakers than any other guild clothier, and their shops were scattered across the city. In 1427, there were 264 shoemakers listed

in Florence's tax rolls, and 7% of these were women. But shoe-making was only one footwear occupation. Other guild specialists included hosiers, sock makers, cobblers, slipper makers, clog makers, leather shoe uppers makers, and shoe or stocking sole makers who sold soles to other specialists. Stockings with soles were sold by the dozen, and drapers sold pre-made fabric shoes. In Venice, leather tanners sold material for boots, sandals, or shoes to customers who took it to boot-makers, sandal-makers, or shoemakers for custom footwear. Hose was both a form of undergarment and footwear, and might be fabricated by either guild professionals or skilled women. They had to be easily washable, and could be knitted or sewn of cloth that originally came from Perpignan in southern France. By the fifteenth century Italian weavers were imitating the stretchy fabric. Hose could be made multicolored, or with each leg different, or dyed in colors to match particular outfits. This was especially important for livery, since a young man's hose had to match his own garments and those of his comrades. For this reason livery was often produced in bulk and handed out by the master. Trends in over-the-counter hose moved about, but red, rose, blue, and "dark" were common.

Laborers and agricultural workers, both men and women, tended to invest in good, strong, leather boots. These could be from ankle to shin in length with heavy leather or wooden soles. Soldiers, too, wore heavy leather boots that laced up or had an upper part that could be folded down around the ankle in warm, dry weather. These *stivali* were often of calfskin or suede, and used by friars whose missions took them long distances on foot. Cavalry, messengers, and other riders also required such sturdy boots. Tuscan peasants wore heavy shoes called *peduli* whose soles were of coiled rope.



In the Hall of Peace in Siena's civic Palazzo Pubblico one finds *The Allegory (or Effects) of Good Government*, frescoed by Ambrogio Lorenzetti (ca. 1290–1348) in 1338–1339. Here a peasant wearing boots and leading a donkey stops at a shoemaker's shop, which displays pairs of shoes, tools, and hose hanging from the bar behind. Like most shops of the day it is open to the street with workmen visible. (Alinari Archives/Corbis/Getty Images)

Higher-status men appear to have worn wooden clogs covered in leather—Spanish, Cordovan, or Moroccan—or fabric, or leather soled shoes. Laces were not common, and footwear was generally just pulled on. Many men’s and women’s styles simply had no back to them. What we might consider slippers were commonly worn at home by men and women, though these could be made of very expensive fabric or glove leather. Soles were of a sturdy fabric or soft leather, and these *scarpe* could be double-soled. Most upper-class women’s shoes were not made for outdoor wear, and could be light and covered in expensive cloth. A new gown could easily require new shoes in matching fabric or recovering an older pair for the occasion.

One of the most infamous women’s styles was the platform shoe. *Zoccoli* were cork- or wood-based clogs or wedgies that could be worn at home or outside. Heavy socks or cloth slippers served as linings. Indoors they were decorated with expensive fabric such as velvet, or painted or even gilded. For outdoor use they might be covered in leather or less ostentatious fabric, and decorated with copper studs, mother of pearl, or silk ribbons. In later sixteenth-century Venice, very tall versions called, among other things, *calcagnetti* made of cork or wood could be as high as 18 inches. It was said that a woman who wore these needed an attendant on either side to walk down a street, lest she topple over. Platforms made sense in a city where standing water and filth often covered the sidewalk-less streets. Evidence suggests that women would wear these to church, where they would change into more practical footwear. Courtesans and prostitutes wore these under ground-length dresses literally to stand out and draw attention to themselves. Of course, accidents did happen and civic authorities included *zoccoli* in sumptuary legislation, regulating height or decoration or both. Siena and Genoa tried this as early as the 1300s. The use of sedan chairs, in which prominent women were carried about, largely replaced the need for the high platforms, but the Renaissance era ended before their use did.

See also: *Fashion and Appearance:* Attire, Children; Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Court, Fashion at; Religious Habits and Vestments; *Politics and Warfare:* Soldiers

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SOCIAL STATUS AND CLOTHING

People's clothing spoke volumes about who they were and how they wanted to be seen. No one might mistake a nobleman for a peasant, unless it was Carnival and the nobleman sought to be so mistaken. Or if the nobleman was seeking to disguise himself for nefarious purposes, he might adopt the peasant's rough garb. Those meeting him might well be fooled, since his clothing belied his true identity: by adopting a different costume he assumed a different identity. He might also feign being a monk, a Jew, a soldier, a liveried servant, or a physician by adopting the clothing appropriate to one of these social groups. Usually, however, one's clothing advertised his or her true place in society, satisfying wearer and viewer alike of the truthfulness of the message. Young did not dress like old, nor laborers like lawyers, widows like maidens, Dominicans like Franciscans.

Finer social distinctions might be made by an ensemble's fabrics, cut, colors, accessories, condition, or state of cleanliness. The compressed and hierarchical Italian courts were Italy's best stages for subtle sartorial signals. A lord might wear the same colors and even cut of tunic and breeches as his liveried servants, but his hat was of velvet and not wool, and his clothes of far finer and more expensive fabrics. Courtiers might very carefully adopt and adapt their hosts' choices in attire, or display that of their home turf, emphasizing their otherness. Merchants, diplomats, clergy, extended family members, and others from French, Spanish, German, or Slavic regions chose or were directed to don Italian fashions to blend in or retain their native garb as a statement of their stance at court. The style of a hat or the cut of a cape on an ambassador could signal an impending political alliance or virtually declare war.

Italy's streets pulsed with rich and poor, locals and foreigners, workers and beggars, exotic visitors and familiar clergy. Most lacked the clothing to dress up or down, and only a laundered shirt might distinguish a workday from a holiday. For the well-off, stepping into the street was to immerse oneself in a highly critical social world of one's inferiors, peers, and betters. Fabrics that were faded or worn, frayed cuffs, or soiled hems might indicate financial problems, family troubles, or personal tragedy. Novel fashions from Spain or France signaled success, possibly travel, and attentiveness to the pose one struck in public.

Catholic clergy had their own hierarchy of costume. It was most obvious when they donned ceremonial clothing for public processions or other rituals. Popes, cardinals, bishops, and abbots stood out with elegant robes, capes, gloves, and headwear made of rich and embroidered brocades and silks shot with gold and silver threads. Monks, priests, and friars wore far simpler habits in the appropriate colors of their respective orders: the black and white of Dominicans, Franciscan brown

or gray, Cistercian white, and diocesan black. Confraternities of pious laymen also adopted recognizable colors or accessories. Members processed as groups, sometimes jostling each other for precedence when protocols or traditions left the matter unsettled.

A bit of clothing as fundamental as a sleeve could convey certain messages. Sleeves were often detachable, providing several looks to a given shirt or jacket. In sixteenth-century Venice, voluminous or puffy sleeves made of a yard or two of cloth of gold or silk were reserved to the city's ruler, the doge. Less costly wide sleeves of crimson and of black were traditional for procurators and doctors, respectively, but wealthy women, too, adopted the fashion. The government reacted by limiting their use, citing the wasteful expense and impropriety. Sixteenth-century German soldiers in Italy called Landsknechts wore bright puffy sleeves that were slashed, revealing bright but tighter sleeves underneath. The colorful fighters themselves might be allies or enemies, but young Italian men adopted the fashion and made it their own, as seen in numerous portraits and city scenes.

Attire of Venetian Councilors

In December 1536, the Venetian State Major Council declared the following: "The councilors of this our city used to go about clothed in scarlet and silk. That custom is very suitable to the position they occupy in this republic, being the principal members, and the persons who immediately represent our dominion. And the said good and laudable custom having been for some time broken through, it is convenient to restore it and establish it firmly by law, in order that it may be observed perpetually, as is fitting for the honor and dignity of our State."

Source: Newett, Mary Margaret. "The Sumptuary Laws of Venice in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries." In Mary Margaret Newett, T. F. Tout, and James Tait, eds. *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College, Manchester*. London: Longmans, Green, and, Co., 1902.

Early fifteenth-century Florentine men of substance wore robes of crimson, while Venetian males generally sported black, with crimson being reserved to civic officials. A Venetian woman signaled her status as a widow by wearing a black dress with train and veil, and hinted that she sought a new match by adding a small but meaningful ornament. To signal their outsider status Jews were forced to wear badges shaped like an O, and prostitutes accessories from gloves to little bells, depending on the city. Just as American prison inmates traditionally wore striped clothing, in Renaissance Italy only children, buffoons, and heretics donned the "devil's pattern."

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Portraits; *Economics*: Cloth Trade; *Family and Gender*: Pregnancy; Widows; *Fashion and Appearance*: Art, Fashion in; Fabrics, Imported; Headgear; Livery; Religious Habits and Vestments; Sumptuary Laws; *Housing and Community*: Foreign Communities; Jewish Communities; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; Soldiers; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; *Religion and Beliefs*: Clergy, Catholic; Confraternities

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SUMPTUARY LAWS

Sumptuary laws were attempts by Renaissance-era governments or the Church to regulate or ban certain types of luxury items that residents owned, displayed, wore, or ate. Several, often overlapping, motives lay behind this kind of legislation: envy of the better-off by the less well-off; disdain for large, wasteful expenditures on frivolous purchases; moral outrage with blatant materialism; desire to prevent lower classes from aping their social betters by wearing their fashions; concern for reminding women and lower-class persons that high-status males controlled society. This last, unlike the others, was never articulated in preambles or recorded debates, but has been imputed by modern historians. The fact is that male-dominated

governments, whether monarchies or republics, repeatedly imposed laws restricting women's dress while that of males was generally untouched. But sumptuary laws also regulated other matters, from funerals and weddings to social banquets, dowries, and trousseaux, and even expensive furniture in Venetian palazzi. From 1200 to 1500 some 300 laws and codes were imposed across Italy.

Genoa imposed the earliest known sumptuary laws in 1157, which satisfied them until 1402. Over the next century no fewer than 18 appeared and reappeared, a familiar pattern across northern Italy. The university town of Bologna passed four codes between 1233 and 1335; its code of 1389 was so specific that it forbade clothing made of figured velvet and velvet with different pile lengths. When Bologna's cardinal imposed new laws against women's fashions in 1453, Nicolosa Santi was prompted to pen the first statement of women's natural rights in Italian. Siena's oldest sumptuary laws date from 1249, Venice's from 1299, and Florence began regulating funeral displays from 1281. Depending on the type of regulation, exemptions were quite common. Venice's doge and usually the Senate and knights were unaffected; elsewhere the same was often true of families—or just men—with the status of knight; bans on fancy textiles usually exempted priestly vestments, and general bans on the wearing of fancy clothing and expensive jewelry were usually suspended during important holidays and political celebrations. Successful appeals, themselves a type of exemption, often went to the wealthy and politically powerful. Infractions of laws entailed a number of punishments, including flogging, fines, and confiscation of the offending items. In general, as the Renaissance era progressed, so did the frequency and scope of sumptuary legislation.

The Venetian Senate imposed the 1299 laws against extravagant wedding ceremonies and women's luxury clothing, ostensibly to keep the lower classes from becoming envious. These were revoked in 1307, but new ones appeared in 1333 and 1334, this time targeting expensive women's and children's clothing and jewelry (30 ducat limit) as a curb against wasteful expenditures. These were annulled five years later. In 1360, new laws limited expensive fabrics for woman's dresses, expenditures for weddings, ornaments of jewels and precious metals, and men's belts (25 ducats). In 1377 Venice first placed limitations on men's clothing. In 1400, both men and women were forbidden to wear outerwear with large sleeves; tailors reacted by lining the shortened sleeves with fur, a dodge that was banned in 1403. In 1425, Venice limited the value of brides' trousseaux; in 1442 women were banned from wearing gowns with cloth of gold or silver, and in 1456 this rule was extended to men's attire. Tailors responded by lining acceptable garments with such materials, until forbidden to do so in 1473. Three years later women were limited to wearing a single strand of pearls worth no more than 50 ducats, and a decade after that women were restricted to wear no more than 10 lire worth

of gold; after 1497 people could own pearls but not wear them. In 1489 the Senate appointed a new three-man commission—the Wise Men (*Savii*) over the Finery (*pompe*) of Women—to oversee the application of all sumptuary laws. Among the first of new laws was the ban on ownership of expensive storage furniture: if a servant turned the master in, the servant was freed and given the piece or pieces (presumably to sell to someone outside Venice). In 1490 iridescent silk-lined women's furs—sable, lynx, ermine—were banned as useless, contrary to tradition, and hateful to God. Wartime and high taxes meant ever more specific restrictions, and in 1514 the *Savii* were replaced by Overseers of Finery. By the 1560s this magistracy had full authority to investigate, legislate, and adjudicate without appeal.

Nicolosa Sanuti vs. the Cardinal

Nicolosa Sanuti was a Bolognese notary's daughter who married very well. Perhaps because she had moved higher on the social ladder, she took great offense at the 1453 sumptuary code imposed by Bologna's Cardinal Bessarion, himself a Greek humanist. She addressed to him her *Oration for the Restitution of Vain Ornaments*, a plea in elegant Latin against the targeting of Bolognese women for such legislation. Why should Bologna's women be singled out for greater modesty than other Italian women? she asked. Women were already forbidden to wear the garb of soldiers, magistrates, or priests, why the further, unjust restrictions? The cardinal made no response.

By 1325, Florence was regulating display at weddings and funerals and of all women—which meant in practice wealthy women. Transvestitism was also banned, for both sexes. The commune changed its mind in 1354, revoking these laws, though in 1355 servant girls were forbidden to wear fur, gilded or silver buttons, or clothing covered in an early form of lace. At least some of this stemmed from the Black Death, which released piles of victims' clothing onto the market, and led employers to lure scarce workers with non-cash perks. In 1356 the archbishop imposed a new set of sumptuary laws aimed clearly at women. Men, however, were targeted in 1377: belts were limited to 2 pounds of silver; tunics had to fall to at least the mid-thigh while standing; and long shoes had to be shortened. The state took the reins back in 1384, and established the Office on Women, which investigated and tried cases of infractions. Women could also buy licenses permitting them to wear otherwise-forbidden clothing or jewelry. That maintenance of social order was an ongoing concern is clear from the 1475 law against peasants wearing garments of silk or velvet or belts with gold, silver, or jewels. Under powerful pressures from the Spanish, in 1548 Siena limited to members of

the governing class the wearing of cloth of gold or silver, expensive silks or linen, shoes of silk, gold chains, and silver or coral accessories unless attached to bracelets, necklaces, rings, or rosaries.

See also: *Arts*: Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; *Family and Gender*: Birth and Midwives; Dowries; Death, Funerals, and Burial; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Children; Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Cosmetics; Fabrics, Domestic; Fabrics, Imported; Gems and Jewelry; Headgear; Shoes and Footwear; Social Status and Clothing; Tailors and Seamstresses; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Death in the Community; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; Weddings; *Primary Document*: Venetian Sumptuary Laws (1304–1512)

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TAILORS AND SEAMSTRESSES

The creation of clothing in Renaissance-era Italy involved a wide spectrum of people, from peasant wives to highly skilled urban specialists. If one could count all of the pieces of clothing created during the period, the vast majority would have been cut and sewn by women in their homes for members of their families. Very often these articles would have been made of home spun and woven cloth, especially in

isolated rural areas. Even here, though, inexpensive commercially produced fabrics became increasingly available through itinerant merchants and trips to country fairs or local towns. Though evidence is lacking, it is easy to assume that certain women became local artists with needle and thread and met the sartorial needs of neighbors, at least until blindness or arthritis set in. Even peasants took pride in specially made clothing for events such as weddings.

From peasant girls to princesses to nuns in fancy convents, young Italian women were taught to sew, and often to do finer needlework such as embroidery or lace-making. Working-class urban families, like their country cousins, wore homemade undergarments, tunics, breeches, dresses, and probably even finery for civic and religious festivals. Every city had thriving secondhand shops that stocked used clothing, and many of the less expensive items must have found their way into the homes of laborers and lower-status artisans. Civic laws could regulate clothing: sumptuary laws forbade low-status people from wearing styles, fabrics, colors, or accessories associated with elites. The laws even punished those who made these items. Sixteenth-century Venetian guild officials raided tailors' shops and seized inappropriately expensive fabrics. In 1415, Florence established set prices that tailors could charge for some 72 specific clothing types for men and women; they were the only occupational group so restricted. 120 years later, the duke established 78 prices; the Milanese lived with only 32.

Men, and a few women, who made their livings as tailors were usually organized in guilds. In Florence they were connected to the silk guild, which originally welcomed female tailors. After the Black Death women were restricted and males' numbers almost doubled by 1402 to 111. Guild tailors served the aristocracy as well as artisans. Whether banker or carpenter, the Florentine customer provided the fabrics and any trimming—threads, laces, buttons, fringes, ribbons, pearls, linings, or fur—and the two discussed the nature of the outfit. Tailors had shops outfitted with a large, clean table, chairs, needles, threads, scissors, mannequins, chests, and pattern books. Printed pattern books for clothing and embroidery grew in number as fashions changed. Between 1527 and 1600 some 190 titles appeared in Italy. Some shops may have had a curtained-off area for measurements, fitting, and final trying on, but elites were usually serviced at home. Certainly women and girls were. Tailors routinely provided other services, such as cleaning, mending, dyeing, starching, and altering expensive items to reflect changes in fashion. No doubt some craftsmen were known for specialty work of high quality, and some, such as doublet-makers and hosiers, were recognized as specialists.

Decorative embroidery and lace-making were women's specialties, and guilds developed in Florence, Milan, Venice, and Genoa. For commercial work, Florence was the early capital, but Milan eclipsed it. In addition to clothing, bed linens, table cloths, towels, and church linens used at Mass received these often-intricate

additions. Nuns and elite young women had long been taught these arts, and some convents were well known for their products. All that was needed was a set of frames, threads in many colors, needles, thimbles, spools, a special pillow, and patterns. Someone named “Zoppino” published ten embroidery pattern books in the 1530s, the later ones including lace. These patterns were perforated by the embroiderer, laid on the surface, and “pounced” with charcoal or pumice dust, creating a temporary outline. This was similar to what fresco painters did with life-size paper cartoons.

For any garment the cost of labor was minor compared with that of the fabric. Tailors could do very well, but in Florence in 1457 almost one in five was considered “miserable,” or very poor. One big problem was producing work on credit. Needing an expensive new suit probably meant other related expenses, such as gifts, dowry, or provisions for a banquet. Guildsmen’s probate inventories and tax records show dozens or scores of debtors. Florentine brothers Giovanni and Agnolo’s 1457 tax list ran to 232 names, including some of the city’s richest families. Unlike other creditors, however, they were only out their time and fixed costs, since the customer provided all of the materials. The key was volume. Giovanni and Agnolo’s father utilized an apprentice and two or three assistants and put out certain work to individual seamstresses. Over a ten-year period his shop created over 800 garments for 168 customers.

At the Italian courts tailors and related craftspeople were treated with the same respect—and disdain—as other suppliers. On the streets of Florence or Venice clothing was the “first face” of an individual and an immediate marker of his or her status and honor. In the pressure-cooker that was the court, all of this was amplified. A rip or a stain or an unfashionable accessory could doom one’s career as a courtier. A foreign visitor’s dress might cause a “viral” shift in necklines or tunic lengths. And there to confront the challenge was a small army wielding scissors, needle, and thread.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Courtly; *Economics and Work*: Cloth Trade; Credit and Loan; Guilds; Putting-Out System; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Espousal and Wedding; *Virtù* and Honor; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Court, Fashion at; Sumptuary Laws

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UNDERCLOTHING

Underclothing may be defined as that worn next to the skin on the torso and pelvic region. A few items such as women's *camicie* appear in inventories, and women such as the Graces in Botticelli's *Primavera* are dressed in flowing, diaphanous examples and nothing else. Paintings display men's hose on the young and the liveried rather liberally, and many male figures dress only in their opaque *camicie*. Certain fashion trends encouraged glimpses of the clean, white *camicia* at an ensemble's cuffs, neckline, or beneath slashed sleeves, but for the most part undergarments were to be worn but not seen.

Women seem to have worn nothing between their legs unless cross-dressing, though there is evidence from trousseaux that they did. They did wear a *camicia* (chemise) that was long sleeved and reached the ankles. It had to be washable, and was made of silk, linen, or cotton that was undyed and could be bleached or not. Costlier items, especially during the sixteenth century, were trimmed at the hem, neck, and cuffs with cutwork, needlework, or lace. Sleeves could be quite wide, to be gathered in pleats and worn beneath loosely laced outer garment sleeves. If a gown had a plunging neckline, modesty could be preserved with a throat-high, gleaming white *camicia*. Trousseau of prominent women might include dozens of *camicie*, which were products of seamstresses or female shirt-makers rather than guild tailors, and could be purchased readymade. Nuns produced these as gifts and for sale; and household women, including servants and slaves, might also meet the family's needs. A female tavern-keeper owned 16 and a carter's daughter 15. Inventories show that even nuns had a dozen or more, which were laundered twice a year. A woman of means probably had *camicie* of several grades and types of

fabric. Unbleached silk was probably reserved for special occasions or worn with gowns that would have exposed the neckline and wrists. Cotton, or the cheaper linen, would have made cleaning them of body oils, dirt, stains, and odors rather easy. It was important to protect over-clothing made of expensive fabrics such as velvets or satins since these were difficult to launder. Removable washable linings served the same function. Corsets seem to have appeared in the sixteenth century, when Venice banned them as dangerous to women's reproductive organs. If they were "long and pointed," and less constricting, they could be tolerated. Corsets were worn over the *camicia* and under the outer garments, and were made of wooden or metal frames laced together and lined with linen or hemp and covered with fancier material.

Men also wore *camicie*, though theirs were shorter and flared less at the waist. Still, a single shirt for Duke Lorenzo of Florence used 3 ½ yards of linen fabric. These were loose rather than tight-fitting garments, and on average of coarser fabrics than women's. Some male fashions allowed much exposure of the garment, so cleanliness was a matter of honor. Like modern T-shirts, they could be worn alone with breeches or hose, especially during exertion. Gussets sewn into the armpits allowed a greater range of arm movement. For men and women, being "clean" meant having on fresh linen. Pilgrims departing Venice were advised to take enough *camicie* to allow a change every day. In a letter to her merchant husband, Margherita Datini wrote that she had received the expected linen cloth and was having eight shirts made for her and a dozen for his use. Two neighbor women were doing the work. A half-century later Florentine aristocratic widow and mother Alessandra Strozzi was looking after her exiled—and unmarried—sons' needs. She mentions sending *camicie* in "their style," suggesting that there were both differences and preferences. This could have been a matter of fabric, cut, neckline, length or width of sleeves, or decoration. Apparently bought in pairs with *camicie* were *mutande*, or underpants of cotton or linen. These sometimes appear in paintings from the back as transparent and only crotch length. Men's hose made of especially flexible knitted or perpignan cloth could be worn under a gown or nearly fully exposed beneath a hip-length tunic. They could be in a pair or with the legs joined like tights. They were laced to the doublet to keep them up. This restricted movement, so laboring men are sometimes depicted with their hose unlaced. Exposed legs were associated with laborers, soldiers, athletes, and liveried servants, and generally avoided by elite males. According to a fresco in the palace in Mantua, when he went to greet his son the cardinal, the duke was dressed in a short tunic and hose the color of his servants, which would have been fitting if he had been riding a horse to meet him. Hose could be multicolored or worn with legs of different colors. Usually, though, liveried retainers, servants, or slaves had to match or show recognized gradations in color to match their differing statuses.

Men also wore codpieces, which were padded bags that held the genitalia, not unlike a jockstrap. Normally the codpiece was worn discreetly under the doublet or tunic, but the more daring displayed it openly. Apparently they also were used as pockets for items such as coins and handkerchiefs.

To sleep, Florentine men, women, and children in Florence wore long night-shirts called *guardacuori*. These used from 4 ½ to 6 yards of cotton or linen, were often lined, and could feature fur trimming or be made of fur. Nightcaps were also common for both sexes. Finally, those who were hospitalized wore a light fabric gown called in Florence a *gabbanella*. It was about knee-length, had no collar, and buttoned down the front.

See also: *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Children; Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Bathing and Personal Hygiene; Fabrics, Domestic; Laundry

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Vestments. *See Religious Habits and Vestments*

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FOOD AND DRINK

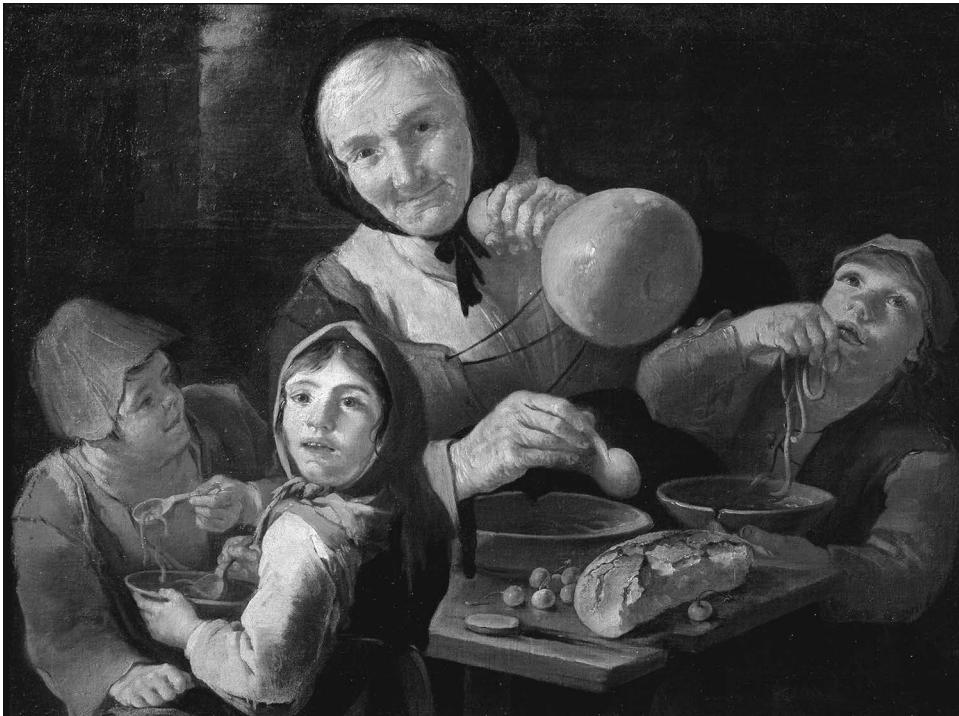


INTRODUCTION

Unlike any of the other topics covered in this work, food and drink were necessities of life. The very word in Italian for foodstuff was also the word for “to live.” Food could also be a pleasure, a form of medicine, a symbol of status, and a marker of one’s religious affiliation. The appearance or disappearance of certain foods marked the chronological and religious seasons of the year. Since most food was grown and consumed locally, cuisine was also regionally determined, as noted by travelers such as the sixteenth-century Frenchman Michel de Montaigne. Far from being isolated, Italy was a crossroads at the center of the Mediterranean Sea and its cuisine was long affected by the traditions of three continents. Thanks to Renaissance-era European contact with the Americas, the number rose to five. In turn, by the sixteenth century Europe looked to Italy for food choices and preparation, and dining etiquette. This was especially true at the top of the social ladder, as northern courts and republican patricians raised the culinary arts to a very high level.

On the bottom rungs of the ladder, the indigent lived in the constant fear of hunger and its consequences. Cities, towns, monasteries, fortresses, and even villages were generally well stocked with a wide variety of foodstuffs, but Italy’s was a commercial economy, and acquiring food usually meant having cash. Charitable and religious institutions might provide simple fare, but growing distrust of the penniless hurt both the shamefaced poor (who received sympathy and food) and the dishonest poor (who did not). Above this level Italians generally ate well, both in terms of calories and in terms of nutritional variety. Though lacking a modern understanding of nutrition and food chemistry, Italians shared an ancient Mediterranean tradition of healthy living through healthy eating. This was encompassed in Classical works whose revival in the Renaissance era made for a better understanding of Greek and Roman medicine.

Though some of their conclusions have been proven false, their impulses were generally sound. Moderation in food and drink, variety in food and drink types, ease of digestibility, avoidance of spoiled food, and an emphasis on good taste were



Though *The Peasants' Meal* is by the Baroque German artist working in Italy under the name Giacomo Francesco Cipper (1664–1736), its simplicity is shared with earlier such genre works. The meal is basic, heavily reliant on bread and the wine in the jug, while the few cherries would have been a real treat. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Image)

universal watchwords. Their notion that good taste leads to good health is behind the popularity of Italian cuisines both now and half a millennium ago.

Whether food was abundant or in short supply due to drought, war, or other causes, it remained at the center of Italian culture. Most Italians were Catholic, a religion that has the Eucharistic meal (Communion) as its vital ritual. Within traditional Mediterranean cultures food was an essential part of hospitality, the provision of which was key to one's honor. At a birth women brought the new mother nutritious sweets; at a death neighbors fed the grieving survivors. Celebrations from a royal entry into a city to a peasant wedding involved the provision of food and drink to the public. By contrast, voluntary abstinence from food or certain foods was a sign of remorse and penitence. Each year the Church season of Lent imposed fasting and abstinence from meat on Catholics as a sign of the world's sinfulness and collective sorrow for it. To clear the cupboards of meat and meat products all celebrated *Carnevale* (Carnival, *carne* = meat), which had become a huge civic celebration. At the far end of Lent was Easter, the joyous—and food-centered—celebration of the Resurrection.

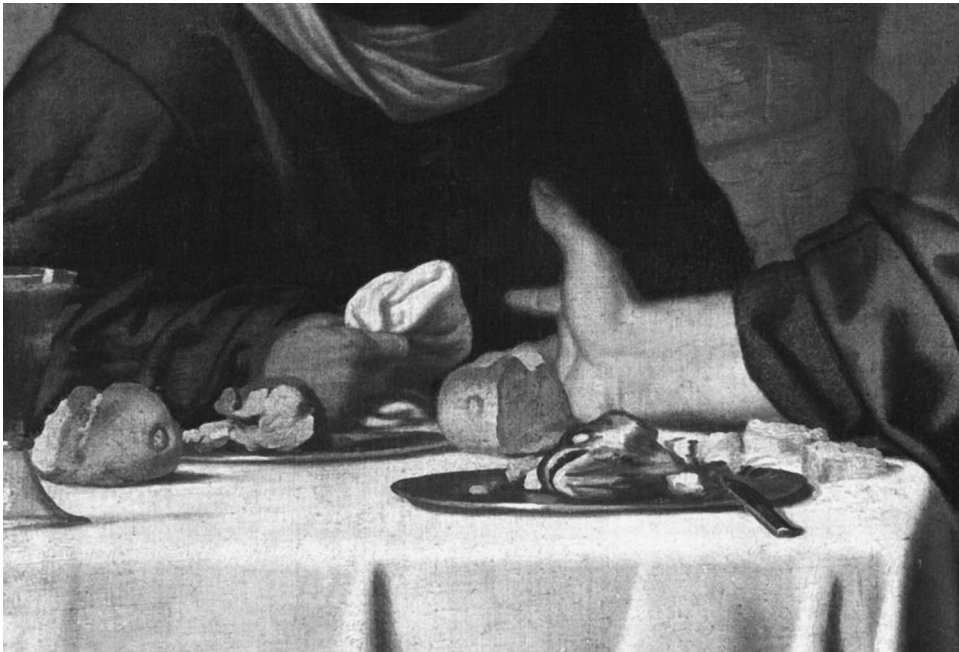
But food was also ubiquitous. On a stroll down a street one would have met smells of salted fish, hard cheeses, baked breads, smoked meats, and spices from apothecaries' shops. Street vendors offered all manner of fresh and prepared foods of varying qualities for a snack or meal. Markets held in *piazze* welcomed gardeners, butchers, fishmongers, and sellers of fresh eggs and other farm produce. From the city walls one looked out over the fields, orchards, flocks, vineyards, groves, farms, ponds, and rivers that stocked urban shops, kiosks, carts, stalls, and pantries. The docks of port cities such as Naples, Messina, Genoa, and Venice were piled high with imported edibles from grain to fruits and spices.

How people consumed food was a matter of tradition and situation. An early breakfast was followed around noon or one with dinner and supper near nightfall. But such regularity was no more the case in fact than it is in modern America. It seemed that families did not eat at one table, but were segregated by sex. Unmarried young people could only dine together if chaperoned, though among the upper classes this seems to have been a rule to be broken. An intimate supper would take place late at night, while business would be conducted over a late breakfast. Table manners and table settings saw real changes across the Renaissance era, at least for the upper classes. Gone were shared cups and implements and slices of hard bread for plates. Books of manners such as the *Galateo* guided potential courtiers on how to impress; and wiping one's mouth with one's sleeve was not a way.

For students of the Renaissance era, primary sources for food, its preparation, and its consumption are surprisingly broad. Household records, including *ricordanze*, inventories, personal letters and accounts, memoirs, and recipe books, get one close to the habits of the literate middle and upper classes. Military, shipboard, ducal court, and institutional accounts shed light on how large numbers were provided for and general levels of nutrition. Poetry, novelle, and proverbs encapsulate popular and anecdotal attitudes, understandings, and uses of food in the broad culture. Courtesy books, cookbooks, Books of Secrets, legal regulations, and medical and dietary manuals provide prescriptive advice. Paintings and other pictorial sources show us what and how people ate, from a peasant with his bowl of beans to a splendid courtly feast. Material remains including cooking tools and dining implements confirm the pictorial record. Finally, human skeletal remains allow specialists to draw some conclusions about human health and levels of nutrition.

BREAD

Bread, wine, and something to eat with them have always been at the heart of Mediterranean food cultures. But bread must be understood as something other



In this detail from the biblical *Dinner at the House of Simon Pharisee* (1544) by Moretto da Brescia (1498–1554) we see the meal's remains: a fish head, bread and what seem to be bits of cheese on or around a silver plate, along with a knife, wine glass, and a cloth napkin. The white table cloth was rather new to the Italian table in 1544. Oil on canvas. (Sergio Anelli/Electa/MONDADORI PORTFOLIO via Getty Images)

than the soft, wheat-based, pre-sliced, plastic-wrapped, loaf found in American supermarkets. Bread was essentially anything edible made with cooked dough or batter from any milled grain flour or blends of flour. It might be leavened or flat; sweet, salty, or bland; eaten plain, filled, or smothered with other foodstuffs; baked, fried, or boiled. The lower in the social classes one went, the greater the reliance on grain products for nutrition. For peasants and poorer urban folk bread might account for 75% of one's daily calories. Symbolically bread was at the heart of Christian ritual in the Eucharist, and its availability meant that local economic conditions were good. For historians, too, its known price levels remain indicators of economic stability and health in Renaissance societies, and Italian folklore and proverbs were filled with references to bread. At table, before plates became common, thick slices of bread served as trenchers—individual or shared plates on which other foods were served.

The gold standard for bread was dough made with pure wheat flour, white with darker impurities sifted out. The baker's oven left the crust crunchy and inside soft and chewy, like today's "Tuscan" bread, or crumbly like cake, in today's Sicilian-type commercial bread. Darker whole-wheat flour was considered a step

down in quality, and inclusion of other grains a matter of adultery, worthy of the poor. The wealthy and powerful had their own bakers and ovens, and the urban well-off counted on guild bakers. These sold pre-baked loaves of purity and size determined by law (prices per loaf generally remained constant while grain price fluctuations were reflected in changing sizes of loaves). Bakers also provided flour and baked loaves specifically for a customer, or a customer would bring in her own flour or dough and have the baker cook it. The last option was especially useful when customers desired unusual blends or types of bread, such as sweet breads with dried fruit bits. Guild regulations dictated how clients paid bakers, but some portion of flour or dough left to be baked was often customary payment. Ovens were the preserve of wealthy families and commercial bakers no less because of the price of fuel as the danger of fire. The baker's oven was dome-shaped inside and heated with a wood fire. Once the embers were removed, the interior slowly moved through three levels of temperature: high for certain pastries and rolls of dough; medium for longer-cooking large bread loaves; and lower for pies, biscuits, and other types of baked goods.

Peasants traditionally cooked their bread in home cooking fire embers. Their wheat, when it was grown locally, went to the landlord or the market, so their bread was usually composed of one or more lesser grain flours. Rye in the Piedmont and in northern Tuscany white millet were preferred lesser bread grains, and elsewhere spelt, barley, and even rice flours were blended into dough and baked. In isolated environs or during famine even chestnuts and lentils were ground to make a kind of bread. Whatever its components, bread never went to waste. Even in grand houses cooks recycled bread slices by frying them like French toast or crumbling them into soups, sauces, and meat puddings to thicken them.

Renaissance-era tables held shortened pastries that ranged from small, open-shelled tarts filled with meats, cheeses, or fruits to inedible deer-sized pie shells for a duke's banquet. Food historian Ken Albala calls the sixteenth century the "age of pies," which included just about anything wrapped in dough. These could then be baked in the coolest oven, pan-fried, deep fried, or boiled like ravioli.

Flat breads also appeared as mold-fried waffles, sometimes served with grated cheese; pan-fried pancakes or crepes served flat or as wraps for a wide variety of fillings; and deep-fried fritters or frittatas. The many Italian festivals and feast-days spawned widely varying treats. Sweet doughs made with cows' milk or cream, almond milk, eggs, sugar, and fruits or nuts were baked as cookies or cakes or fried like doughnuts and were sold from bakers' shops or special stalls. Simple doughs of flour, water, and eggs were pan fried and dusted with sugar or drizzled with honey. The spring-time Lenten season, during which consumption of meat was forbidden, spawned the use of lighter flour and egg-based batters for coating or binding fried early vegetables, herbs, cheeses, and even some flowers, not unlike Japanese tempura.

Food for Thought

Sixteenth-century Jewish physician and natural historian Abraham Portaleone of Mantua was asked the difference between “lotus bread” and “aquatic bread.” Both appeared in Classical sources among 50 bread types. True to the age, he consulted bakers and Classical and Muslim authors. Lotus bread was said to be soft, easily digested, and of little nutritional value. After reading Talmud Passover guidelines, he concluded that it was essentially a Jewish bread that was scalded and then fried. Ancient Pliny described aquatic bread as from Parthia, soft, and spongy due to water-drawn dough. Portaleone eventually recognized it as common *buffetto* bread, available at a local bakery.

In a variation on couscous the Sardinians invented soccu, for which small pellets of dough were dropped into boiling soup. The practice migrated to Genoa and eventually emerged as the substantial pasta e fagioli (pasta and bean) and minestrone soups. Biscuits, like other bread products, retained moisture and had a short shelf life. Rebaking biscuit in a cooler oven removed the remaining moisture and created two important, long-lasting products. One was biscotti used at sea and in supplying soldiers in the field. Called hardtack in England, ship’s biscuit tended to get wormy or maggot infested but it satisfied hungry sailors. Unlike English and Spanish seamen, however, most Italians sailed close enough to friendly ports to resupply frequently, so the biscotti was generally served only to galley oarsmen. Military suppliers in Italy also provided soldiers with bagel-like rings of the hard, twice-baked dough that they carried on cords when on campaign. When sweetened with honey or sugar one got the biscotti of which moderns tend to think: the hard, cookie-like Italian accompaniment to coffee.

The sixteenth-century Italian wars were attended by direct infusions of food preferences from Spain, France, Germany, and Switzerland. Italian cookery books reflect these new influences that augmented the native Italian genius for making dough interesting.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Novella; *Economics and Work*: Grain Trade; Guilds; *Family and Gender*: Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; *Food and Drink*: Diet and Social Status; Feasting and Fasting; Grains and the Wheat Market; Hunger and Famine; Nutrition: A Modern Assessment; *Housing and Community*: Poor, Aid to; *Politics and Warfare*: War and Civilians; *Religion and Beliefs*: Sacraments, Catholic; *Science and Technology*: Agriculture and Agronomy

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CIVIC FOUNTAINS AND POTABLE WATER

In 1916, Italian composer Ottorino Respighi premiered his orchestral suite “The Fountains of Rome.” In it, he attempted to capture in music the stately statuary and varied liquid motions of Rome’s watery monuments. Classical Rome boasted some 1,200 fountains, fed by a dozen aqueducts and hundreds of miles of lead pipes that delivered millions of gallons of drinkable water daily to its densely packed population. As the city decayed during the early Middle Ages, aqueducts filled up with silt or crumbled away; pipes were crushed or unearthed for other purposes; and fountains were put to other uses or burnt for lime. Only the Acqua Vergine, with its outlet the old Trevi Fountain and service to the malarial Campus Martius, served the city’s shrunken population. At least, it did so when cared for. In the 1450s Pope Nicholas V had architect and polymath Leonbattista Alberti repair the works, and in 1570 Sixtus V had them refurbished anew. The burgeoning city’s thirst was addressed again in 1587 when the Acqua Felice (at twice the length of the Vergine), with its triumphal arch framing Moses, was reactivated with service to the Quirinal Hill. From 1612 the powerful Acqua Paola brought water to the Janiculum Hill and the Vatican. So strong its flow, it was harnessed primarily for early Baroque show fountains, such as those in front of St. Peter’s Basilica. By 1581 at least 130 institutions and private palazzi were receiving water, and by 1630 more than 80 fountains and spigots distributed the popes’ water to the public.

Water that flowed from new or reactivated fountain jets was far less contaminated than that sourced in wells, urban streams, or rainwater-fed cisterns. Nonetheless, unless the aqueduct was covered along its entire length, its contents collected debris and bird droppings. Precipitation at the reservoir and aeration at the fountain solved some pollution problems, but not all. Relatively few Renaissance-era households, only the wealthiest and most powerful in any city, would have water piped to their property. Lesser folk who could afford it bought potable water from water-sellers who carried or carted their product in casks the long city blocks from source to customers’ kitchens. The late sixteenth-century Fontana del Facchino in

Rome features a period relief sculpture of just such a tradesman. The figure was so well known that the fountain became a literal bulletin board for political and social criticism and satire known as *pasquinades*. Children, slaves, or servants in families further down the ladder delivered their households' casks, buckets, or pitchers-full of water. Only in the poorest families would wives or mothers do the heavy lifting. Even though fountain-sourced water was considered potable, often marked with the symbolic unicorn of purity, households were far more likely to cook or wash with it than drink it.

The situation was similar in other cities. Hilltop Perugia obtained both political liberty and a working aqueduct in the 1270s. Citizens immediately celebrated with the grand, 25-sided Fontana Maggiore. Its panels, featuring both Classical and Christian subjects, were sculpted by Nicola Pisano. It remains in the city's main *piazza*, between the cathedral and the center of political life. A similar monument is hilly Siena's Fonte Gaia, directly facing Siena's city hall and activated in 1346. Its sides were sculpted between 1408 and 1419 by Jacopo della Quercia with Classical Roman (civic) and Christian subjects, dominated by Siena's spiritual protector the Virgin Mary and her Child. Like other such urban water sources, one side of the wall—today a nineteenth-century copy—is lower so that people might approach and scoop up its precious contents or refresh themselves. The Siennese commune sold rights to dig shafts to those hopeful of tapping into the mythical underground river Diana. Not mythical were *bottini*, human-sized tunnels excavated over channels through which Siennese ground water flowed. Users dropped buckets on ropes through shafts to access the potable water. Siena's easternmost fountain, Fonte Ovile, had been reactivated in 1246 for animal use, while Fontebranda was set aside for tanners, horses, and laundresses and Fonte Nuova for animal slaughter and butchers. By 1600 Siena could boast a dozen large and several smaller gravity-fed fountains.

The Baroque era was the heyday of the grand fountain, but Renaissance-era monuments could be eye-catching as well. Messina constructed one featuring a huge statue of Neptune (1554–1557), and Florence responded with its hulking sea god that still marks Piazza Signoria (1560–1574). Ancient sarcophagi were retrofitted to serve as troughs for use of animals and workers, and simple low basins accommodated laundry and industrial uses.

In the later fifteenth century, architect and engineer Francesco di Giorgio Martini designed Naples's vast and complex system of underground water channels, while the Milanese gathered alpine water in their surface canals and reservoirs. Deep wells could tap subsurface water, but wells had to be well lined to keep out filthy seepage of water closer to the surface. An entire guild was devoted to barge-men who shipped supplies of reasonably fresh water from up the Brenta River.

Rural potable water was collected in rainwater cisterns, from wells, and along watercourses whose water had not been polluted by upstream use. Well heads were

usually built up with square or cylindrical structures that were covered to prevent pollution and accidents. Users might drape their rope over a sturdy bar above the opening or through a pulley that hung from the bar to make recovery of their filled bucket a bit easier.

See also: *Arts:* Sculpture; *Family and Gender:* Health and Illness; *Fashion and Appearance:* Bathing and Personal Hygiene; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and *Piazze*; Patronage; Sewage, Sewerage, and Public Sanitation; Villages and Village Life; Water; *Politics and Warfare:* City Halls

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CONDUCT AT TABLE

While everyone consumed food alone occasionally, one only dined in company (literally “with bread”). Eating was a group experience, one that was familial or communal, and sharing a meal with visitors, guests, or even strangers only heightened the activity. The Tuscan, for example, lived “with one bread and one wine,” and dozens of proverbs embed the dining experience at the heart of familial and, by extension, social life. What one ate was more a matter of social class than of personal taste, as was how one behaved while eating. How one ate was a social act. Part of this was economic, as the better off could afford to dine in special spaces, on dedicated furniture, off a number of high-quality dishes, and with a variety of utensils that were unavailable to the rural or urban poor. An equally important factor, however, was the intention of the upper class to differentiate itself clearly from rural folk, urban poor, and those beneath them in general. While an aristocrat might be willing to admit that at one time his family was little better off than those working his estate, he took great pride in the notion that his ancestors had transcended the limitations of their origins. By the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries maintaining social order required that the elite share a set of behaviors that demonstrated their social superiority and identified them apart from the lower classes. Like other social customs, dining traditions also differed regionally, and changed at different

rates, so that in 1550 a traveling noble couple from a northern Italian court might well be embarrassed at the manners of a less sophisticated southern host.

Whether in a peasant hovel or at a ducal banquet, physical arrangements for eating reflected traditional hierarchies. In general, adults ranked ahead of children, men before women, and family before servants. Guests of equal status, however, came before all except the host and, among the elite, hostess. Differences in status were often more obvious in peasant settings than among the upper class, if only due to the scarcity of dishes, utensils, and even chairs or benches. Traditionally, adult males received the finest treatment, however lowly that might be. Women, including the mistress of the house, might be relegated to the kitchen or worse, along with children and servants if any. To the Tuscan proverb above, one might add “one bowl, one cup, one knife, one spoon, one napkin.” The communal or family spoon would be passed around to be dipped into the common soup bowl, or fingers would fish around for bits of meat in the stewpot. A thick slice of bread might serve as a spongy individual plate (trencher), but for the most part food went directly from serving dish into mouth via fingers or a serving implement. Wine and water poured from pitchers would likewise be shared from a single cup, each diner waiting his or her turn until the previous user had emptied it. A tablecloth meant that diners used their corner of it on their hands after dipping, fishing, grasping, and licking. If no tablecloth, then a towel (from *tavola*, “table”) made the rounds, or one’s sleeve sufficed.

Surely the upper classes did better. For much of the early Renaissance era, however, they followed customs little different from those of their country cousins. They had bigger rooms and more tables, and distance from the host marked one’s status. It seems that shared dishes and utensils at table were also common among the aristocrats and patricians, though these might be glass drinking vessels, ceramic instead of wooden bowls, and a shared wooden or ceramic plate instead of a trencher. Perhaps a major difference was that pairs of diners shared these instead of the entire table. Large portions of meat were eaten by hand, and whole fowl were torn apart at table. Evidence for evolution in eating habits is scattered, but by the late 1400s the sharing of tableware was considered low class. Whereas the foods commonly consumed had differentiated rich and poorer (the rich: meat, fruit, and wheat bread; the poor: vegetables and black bread), the use of more or less expensive—and more rather than fewer—bowls, plates, glasses, napkins, and implements—including newly acceptable individual forks—would more fully identify the well-off. As guests the elite could distinguish themselves by their knowledge and appreciation of the new customs at table. By the early 1500s Italians also sought to distinguish themselves from the French, Swiss, Germans, and Spaniards who were ranging about the peninsula conducting armies, diplomacy, and business. Books of manners such as Giovanni della Casa’s *Galateo* (1558) were intended to inform the otherwise-ignorant aristocrat of the new rules, and

sixteenth-century Italian literature is filled with cautionary tales of boorish nobles bumbling about in a changing world. Italy's high society was coming to expect a higher level of behavior from its members, just as it expected fancy clothing, graceful dancing, and the ability to converse knowledgeably and in an elevated style. While this attention to acceptable conduct by the upper classes was not exactly new, the disquieting events and trends of the 1500s may have given attention to one's deportment a new sense of urgency. The definition of nobility itself was becoming individualized as older determinants such as family and landed wealth gave way to character and personal qualities signaled by good manners.

The importance of good manners at table was bolstered by the importance of dining to Italian culture in general. Yet, as the *Galateo* points out, acceptability of behavior while dining was and is a relative matter, we would say culturally determined. Propriety was learned and taught, whether while growing up peasant or patrician, or uncomfortably as an adult in the demanding world of the late Renaissance.

See also: *Arts:* Ceramics, Decorative; *Daily Life in Art:* *Family and Gender:* Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; *Fashion and Appearance:* Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drink:* Diet and Social Status; *Literature of Food and Cooking:* Tools for Cooking and Eating; *Housing and Community:* Furnishing the House; Palazzi; Villas; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Drunkenness; Taverns and Inns; Weddings

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Confections. *See* Sugar and Confectioned Sweets

Dairy. *See* Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy

DIET AND SOCIAL STATUS

Renaissance-era Italian society had three broadly defined social classes. The aristocracy of blood and wealth was based in both city and countryside; the largely urban entrepreneurial, skilled craft, or professional class was sometimes referred

to as borghese (bourgeois); and the lower class, by far the largest, was made up of rural peasants and farmers and the urban working and begging poor, often themselves of rural origins. Social mobility was a mark of the age, as skilled peasants could move into town and bankers' sons could marry into the nobility. As important as having an upper status based on wealth, family, or occupation was appearing to belong to that class. Clothing, housing, and reputation were obvious class markers, but so were manners at table and the foods one served and consumed.

In general, the well-off ate fresh meat and the poor salted meat if at all; peasants ate vegetables, and fruit was reserved for the elite; expensive spices flavored upper-class dishes, while salt and some herbs sufficed for the lower; the wealthy cooked in olive oil, and the poor ate the cured ripe olives; the bread of the rich was made of wheat, soft, and white, but that of the poor consisted of flour from every grain but wheat, and was hard and gritty. In large part the discrepancy in every case was a matter of price: for example, even though the peasants grew and harvested the wheat its value was such that it had to be sold, even if the farmers owned and disposed of their own crop.

In other cases food economics joined with simple anti-rural bigotry meant to keep the peasant in his or her "place" in the world. Social order reflected cosmic order, and social order was sustained by clear patterns of differentiation, as in clothing, housing, or diet. God made a man a peasant or a pope, and popes no more chewed on garlic than peasants drank fine spiced wine. In the Renaissance mind, both would have been simply unnatural. Aristotle in his *Politics* (I.2.7) wrote that the "difference between servants and masters is established by nature." Renaissance-era medicine, based on Galen's humors, reinforced these social prejudices. Aristocrats were by nature and by humoral complexion best fed refined and delicate foods, adjusted for their palates and constitutions with spices and other accompaniments. Meat, spices, fruit, and the best olive oil were reserved for the higher classes because these people needed these niceties in their diets. By the later sixteenth century this was "proven" by the aesthetic theory of taste, in our terms of appreciation for high-quality items. The highest orders of people were born with good taste, for everything from music to caviar. An attentive middling class could acquire some elements of good taste by exposure and habit. The peasant by nature had a cruder constitution, incapable of enjoying finer things. His or her body was suited to hard work, pain, and plain foods, and would literally suffer from a higher-class diet. Or so said the elite members of the professional medical community. Dr. Baldassare Pisanelli of Bologna wrote in 1585 of the dietetic regimens appropriate respectively to the rich and poor: the rich man's proper diet will sicken the poor man just as quickly as the poor man's diet will cripple the noble. When peasants dine on birds, they get sick.

One socio-medicinal aspect of food quality was directly related to another aspect of the natural order. The peasant diet should consist of those foods that naturally grew closest to the ground, while the noble diet should be built around those foods that were literally higher in the natural order. The highest are the birds and fowl, whose flesh would sicken the peasant. Fruits from trees trump lower-growing berries, and both beat out most vegetables. To the banqueter, root vegetables were less acceptable than leafy ones, and beef or venison from long-legged cows or deer was preferable to pork from wallowing swine. Fish and seafood might have been considered the lowest of all, but life in the water meant a high level of motility, and this made them more like birds and nothing like plant products. One way of integrating tasty but lower order foods was the notion of ennobling a foodstuff by association with ingredients of a higher order. Using lowly garlic in goose stuffing ennobled that quintessential peasant's food, and preparing vegetables with oil, spices, wine, and a bit of good meat or fat made them an acceptable side dish.

Venetian Sumptuary Regulations

Though sumptuary laws usually regulated clothing, from the first in 1299 the Venetian Senate also set limitations on expenditures for patrician wedding banquets. These were revoked in 1307 and reinstated in 1334. In the 1460s a maximum of ½ ducat per guest was imposed on wedding and social club banquets. The year 1472 saw laws forbidding the serving of certain expensive fowl, gilded food, more than three dishes—not counting confections—and banqueting outside of a house. New laws passed in 1483 and 1489 (maximum of two banquets with 40 guests each), renewed in 1509 as guest lists were topping 300. Sixteenth-century regulations were even more intrusive and futile.

Peasants and the poor were said to have dreamed of Bengodi, the Italian equivalent of *The Land of Cockaigne*, where everything was made of food and it rained ravioli and roasted pigeon. And of course it remained a dream. Economics, medicine, culture, and laws—like sumptuary legislation that restricted apparel and even food choices—conspired to keep the classes distinguished and the lowest in its place. Folktales embodied the elite position: in one a peach tree owner scolds a poor thief, “leave my fruit alone, and eat your own: turnips, garlic, leeks, onions, and shallots, along with sorghum bread.” Poet Francesco Berni in 1522 prayed somewhat ambiguously: “May God not let you know, peasant, that which you cannot enjoy: cardoons, artichokes, peaches, eels, and pears.” The poet's “cannot enjoy” was probably meant more as a dig at the rustic's supposed natural inability to appreciate the delicacies than at the economic and cultural bars to his doing so.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Novella; *Family and Gender*: Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Infancy, Nursing, and Wetnursing; *Fashion and Appearance*: Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drink*: Bread; Conduct at Table; Feasting and Fasting; Fruits and Vegetables; Galenic Health Regimens; Hunger and Famine; Literature of Food and Cooking; Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy; Nutrition: A Modern Assessment; Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices; Sugar and Confectioned Sweets; Wines; *Housing and Community*: Foreign Communities; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Weddings

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Dining Out. *See* **Eating Out**

DRUGS

The line between food and drugs was rather thin. Most Renaissance-era Italians were firm believers in the Galenic model of human health. Accordingly, the body was regulated by four humors or fluid-like substances whose levels had to be maintained at optimal levels for best results. Good diet and wise habits of living supported good health, but when not enough the body required supplements. Illness resulted from a deficiency of one or more of the humors. Each humor had a character that mixed the supposed “qualities” of either hot and cold with either wet and dry in an intensity level of one to four. Everything one consumed shared some combination of these qualities, and the goal was to match the deficient humor with the appropriate powerful supplements to effect a rebalance. Because of their strong scent and flavor, many herbs were considered good supplements, and each had an agreed-upon set of qualities. Foreign spices with even more flavor intensity had to have even more healing power, and this belief fueled demand for often high-priced peppers, turmeric, and cinnamon, among many other exotic imports.

Further intensification could be effected by distilling or pressing out essential oils, the work of apothecaries.

A second function of drugs was to help rid the body of defective humors or of the products they create. Purgatives aided the body in purging all sorts of matter. Vermifuges such as coralline drove out digestive tract worms through the anus; carminatives made the anus “sing” with expelled gas; laxatives used the same orifice for excrement. Diuretics rid the body of urine; sudorifics of sweat; and expectorants of phlegm in the lungs. Emetics aided vomiting. Results could be malodorous and messy. High-end purgatives included China root, medicinal rhubarb, and manna, derived from Calabrian ash tree sap. At the sixteenth-century Florentine apothecary shop Gigli, six of ten top-selling drugs were purgatives.

A third function was to protect the body against poison or the effects of poison once ingested or developed internally. Purgatives might help expel poison, depending on where in the body it was located, but prevention was, of course, to be preferred. Drugs with this quality were in high demand since plague was understood to be caused by poisoned air that penetrated and poisoned the heart.

Medicinal simples were individual ingredients characterized by a single set of qualities (hot/cold, wet/dry) and perhaps some purgative ability. The most popular simple was *cassia solutiva*, an inexpensive purgative imported in pods from Egypt. Compounding these with other simples or with vehicles such as rosewater, honey, or sugar could enhance the desired effects, reduce unwanted side effects, or make the simple easier to swallow or digest. The “queen” of compounds was theriac, a drug mentioned by Galen in the second century AD. His version included 64 simples and other ingredients, while the Renaissance Venetian recipe required at least 81. Each of these was necessary since it affected a particular humor, organ, or bodily function. This cure-all, or panacea, contained fresh female viper meat aimed at counteracting poison and opium that dulled pain. During its heyday, some 40 Venetian pharmacists produced thousands of pounds annually, most in a grand public show that took place over several days in late June each year. It had to age for years, according to tradition and law, before being sold as a prophylactic and remedy for just about any ill including plague: a printed list of uses from 1596 is 15 pages long.

Apothecaries carried out physicians’ orders for specific compounds and carried standard and secret proprietary recipes for remedies. A fresh, as opposed to aged, decoction from Florence included prunes, tamarinds, violets, barley, and seeds of cucumber, pumpkin, watermelon, and other melons. “Dieradon Abbatis” contained sandalwood, red rose petals, and candied sugar, all pulverized and added to various spices, seeds, sugar, camphor, and natural gums to hold it together. Nasty tasting pills were coated with wax or sugar, and some expensive ones were lightly

gilded; it was believed gold enhanced the effect in the body. Foul-tasting blends were suspended in syrups, honey, rosewater, or wine. Many recipes were handed down from medieval Arab or Persian physicians or even, like theriac, from earlier authorities. Renaissance apothecaries, however, also developed their own. Early ones were contained in collections such as the *Florentine Recipe-book* (1499), published by the guild and containing 489 recipes. Some two-thirds were taken directly from a medieval work of c. 1200. Florence's Medici duke reissued the work in 1550 and in 1567, reducing it to 262 recipes of mostly ancient Greek and modern origin and requiring its use by all apothecaries.

Theriac

Theriac was a complex compound of 60 to 70 ingredients—including viper flesh and opium—prepared and sold by apothecaries. A favorite of Galen in the second century AD, it had had a long history as a supposed antidote to poison, a powerful purgative and panacea, and a prophylactic against diseases such as plague. Renaissance-era apothecaries in Venice and other cities prepared their batches in an annual open-air ritual overseen by medical authorities and the public. Preparation took 40 days to complete, after which the mixture was left to age for 12 years before being reduced to pills.

Sixteenth-century German physician Paracelsus, and his followers, rejected Galenic humoralism and understood human health in terms of chemical rather than organic imbalances. Mercury had already been used against syphilis—with some success but terrible side effects—and alchemically trained empirics experimented with and sold inorganic drugs, especially as purgatives, and sought to make drinkable gold. Medical authorities rejected this form of alternative medicine, however, and practitioner Leonardo Fioravanti was harassed and jailed in Milan, Rome, and Venice for his efforts. Among his nostrums were Calomel (mercurous chloride), Roman Vitriol (copper sulfate), and Precipitato (mercuric oxide), each to be suspended in tasty rosewater.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; Spice Trade; *Family and Gender:* Fertility, Conception, and Contraception; Health and Illness; Pregnancy; *Food and Drink:* Galenic Health Regimens; Literature of Food and Cooking; Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices; *Housing and Community:* Physicians; Plague; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Science and Technology:* Alchemy; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Medical Education; Pharmacopeias and Materia Medica

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EATING OUT

Visitors to Pompeii today can walk into what was an ancient Roman fast-food restaurant and see the holes in countertops that held basins of hot or cold prepared food to be taken away. During the Renaissance era the consumption of food pre-prepared by someone other than family members or servants or in a place other than one's residence was very common in urban areas and even villages.

A family dining at the same table at the same time out of the same pot was probably far from normal. In lower-class families, men, including neighbors, relatives, and friends, generally ate together, served by women or servants who ate in the kitchen area with any children. Upper-class families probably followed a similar pattern, with family women and children being served in their portion of the house and adult males in the camera or an outdoor space. Eating at home meant that one knew exactly what one was consuming: how fresh the eggs were, where the bread had been baked, and how long the roast had been cooked. Eating away from home had little appeal for the family man, and for the woman it was probably not an option.

One major exception was when friends, relatives, patrons, the ruler, or city government was paying the bill. Weddings, funerals, dynastic births, military victories, major religious feast days, or dignitaries' visits could present opportunities to dine and drink socially at others' expense. When the bounty of the wealthy spilled out onto public tables in streets and loggias, it could mean dishes rarely dreamt of by laborers or artisans. Humbler occasions, such as parish celebrations or a neighbor's daughter's wedding would often mean free—if not fancy—food in abundance. Many Italian civic authorities, however, sought to curb excesses in such practices with sumptuary laws whose purpose was to curb excessive display and expense.

People who lived alone—students, bachelors without a cook, widows without cooking facilities—could easily make do with “store-bought” edibles such as bread from a bakery, hard cheese from a cheese shop, dried meat such as salami, and hard boiled eggs. Street vendors hawked all of these and a great many more foods: vegetables and fruits, beans, olives, seeds, cooked meats, soft cheeses, sweet breads, roasted nuts. Until recently Florentine street vendors still sold hot roasted chestnuts and tripe (not together) during the cold winter season. Public markets also sold ready-to-eat foods prepared and sold by country women or widows with cooking facilities. Genoese shops specialized in meat and vegetable pies that could be bought, taken to a local oven such as a bakery, cooked, and then eaten. Men who worked too far from home to return for a midday meal could find plenty of options.

Travelers could find hospitality—including very basic meals—at rural monasteries or convents, especially if they were pilgrims or could leave a donation. Many carried their own prepared food on the road, and others purchased food such as poultry or polenta that was later cooked by their hosts. Taverns and inns provided food and drink to locals and travelers alike. For many it was little more than wine, bread, and cheese—heavy on the wine. Pistoia had several laws regulating eating prepared foods: customers had to stay within the space where it was purchased, and if towels covered cooked food for sale, the towels had to be freshly cleaned. Also, it was illegal to throw water on displayed food to freshen it up or increase its weight. In the later fourteenth century the Stella Inn in Prato sold bottled wines and served meals that varied in price from 10 soldi for a fixed price meal to ala carte feasts costing several lire. Even Prato’s mayor dined here. To protect the interests and safety of pilgrims, Rome’s authorities set maximum prices for foods at *osterie* (hostelries or inns). Roman *frascette* took their name from the wreath of dried branches and vines that hung as advertisement outside their often rural doors. These were essentially wine bars selling their own vintages. Unlike many inns or taverns these were family friendly. Local families brought entire meals to eat in or outside, along with pitchers of the house’s best wine. Small rural and urban public houses with a couple of rooms to rent usually shared whatever the family was eating with those seeking to lodge or only stay for a meal.

There was no such thing as high-end dining out. Well-off visitors to a city could usually find hospitality from their peers, including fine meals. Honor being what it was, it would have been dishonorable not to provide it. Locals who could afford to eat well did so in their own homes on fine foods supplied and prepared by their servants.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Retail Selling; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender:* Widows; *Food and Drink:* Feasting and Fasting; Foodsellers and Markets; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and *Piazze*; *Recreation and*

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Eggs. *See* Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy

Etiquette. *See* Conduct at Table

Famine. *See* Hunger and Famine

FEASTING AND FASTING

Food is as necessary to the human spirit as it is to the human body, to paraphrase a number of Italian proverbs. It was an important symbol that crossed the sacred and secular aspects of Italian culture. Christian worship centered on the Eucharistic meal celebrated at the Mass, at which believers consumed God's own flesh and blood under the appearance of bread and wine. Yet studies show that at any given Mass few of the laity actually partook of the communion meal. Seeing the spiritual and physical food sufficed. Conversely, the Church and most communities insisted on refraining from all food or from specific foods at certain times as a sign of membership in the community. Rural, urban, religious, and court communities also feasted at certain times as a sign of joy and solidarity.

Although hunger was a part of many people's lives, accepting it voluntarily was a requirement for all good Catholic Christians. The Church taught that all people were sinners and that God required penance, acts of self-sacrifice, that were outward signs of inner sorrow for one's sins. Fasting was one type of penance. Ignoring the body's desire for food was an ancient way of disciplining it, of transcending earthly demands and pleasures to strengthen the spirit. The good Christian was also to abstain from eating meat, eggs, and poultry during the 40-day period (minus Sundays) that led up to Easter, known as Lent. Just as one prepared for the Eucharist by

fasting (and later having breakfast), one celebrated the taking away of meat—*carne levare*, or Carnival—during the few days leading up to the beginning of Lent. All meat and meat products were to be consumed before Ash Wednesday, the memorial of human mortality and a day of fasting. Though fasting and abstinence were to be undertaken for spiritual reasons, very secular laws with punishments imposed it on certain days of the year. Breaking a fast or restrictions on meat consumption was a sure sign one was a Jew or heretic, or from the 1520s a Protestant.

Just as refraining from food was symbolic of sorrow for sin, so overindulging in it symbolized joy. It also suggested wealth, satisfaction, and generosity, especially when a host supplied the food. Church holidays including Easter, Ascension, All Saints' Day, and Christmas often meant special foods, just as Thanksgiving means turkey for many Americans. Other religious feast days included those dedicated to specific saints, especially if the community's churches were dedicated to him or her. During the Middle Ages cities had dedicated themselves to certain saints, such as St. Mark in Venice, St. John in Florence, and the Virgin Mary in Siena, and their feast days were celebrated locally. Food always marked festivals, often served or sold publicly. In Orvieto near Rome, lamb signaled Easter, Ascension meant eggs and cheese, goose and duck All Saints' Day (November 1), lasagna marked Christmas, pork St. Anthony's Day, and macaroni "Fat Thursday," the second day of meatless Lent. Tradition also dictated that spelt rather than other grains be consumed during Lent.

Special occasions in a family or community also meant feasting with the best and most food available. Weddings, deaths, military victories, the birth of an heir to the local lord, or the election of a new pope brought the tables into the streets and wine from the cellars.

The wealthy and powerful normally ate well and far more often suffered from gluttony than hunger. Nonetheless, feasts also punctuated their annual religious cycles and marked special occasions in their community or court. For the rich and nobles "special occasion" might well mean a visit from the king of France or emperor, or a son being raised to cardinal. From about the middle of the fifteenth century the Aristotelian idea of "magnificence" began to shape behaviors of the elite. Clothes became more elaborate, elegant palaces were preferred to sturdy castles, and feasting was done on a scale that could only be called Roman. The plenty of a medieval feast was replaced by extravagance and ostentation. During the sixteenth century a crew of cooks and servers were charged with outdoing the neighbors—whether bankers or dukes. Entire plays replaced jugglers or skits, orchestras the lute-playing poet, and class-defining table manners a spectrum of behaviors from oafish to genteel. Books on proper conduct such as Neapolitan Giovanni Pontano's *On Banquets* (1518) and Giovanni della Casa's *Galateo* (1558) shaped what both guests and host did, and numerous published cookbooks both suggested and recorded what hosts served.



The acute angle of view of the diners in this detail from the *Wedding Feast at Cana* (1563) by Venetian Paolo Veronese (1528–1588) allows us to see the sumptuously dressed guests as well as the tastefully laid-out table. This includes plates for each place, though only the two men seem to be drinking. Note the woman in the back picking her teeth. Oil on canvas. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

Cristoforo Messisbugo administered food service at the d'Este court in Ferrara. In 1549 he published *Banquets*, in which he described, among other things, the truly obscene court feasts. In 1529 Cardinal Ippolito d'Este visited his relatives. This visit was celebrated by a play, a concert, and seven hours of eating. There were 17 courses consisting of 140 different dishes, an average of eight per course. For example, the first consisted of trout, eggs, fish guts, sturgeon, soup, bream, and small fried fish. All told Messisbugo listed 30 varieties of fish. In his book papal cook Bartolomeo Scappi included 17 ways to prepare sturgeon. A single course at court could consist of 20 dishes. No one expected everyone to eat everything, and some of the “food” was only interesting decoration. Rather, as at a modern buffet diners picked and chose among the offerings.

Between 1450 and 1550 a host of innovations changed the landscape of the dining table. Diners now had their own chairs as well as plates, drinking vessels, silverware, and folded napkins in place of one's sleeve. The Venetians pioneered covered serving dishes from which servants deposited food on plates, and sugar became an artistic medium for edible sculptures. A wine steward chose varieties to suit courses and poured them into Venetian glassware, and the meat carver served as master of ceremonies, as we learn from Vincenzo Cervio's *The Carver* (1580).

Fasting and Feasting in Art

Hundreds of emaciated saints from Anthony to Francis vividly depicted penitential fasting. Feasting provided a more upbeat theme. In Botticelli's *Wedding Banquet of Nastagio degli Onesti* (1483) banqueters sit facing one another at two long, receding tables under an outdoor loggia, while liveried servers gracefully prepare to present the first course. Veronese's Venetian *Dinner in the House of Levi* was originally a *Last Supper*, but the Inquisition objected to the presence of many richly clad diners, dogs, dwarves, servants, German soldiers, and elaborate table settings. The artist simply changed the title thus quieting the tribunal.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; *Fashion and Appearance*: Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drink*: Conduct at Table; Diet and Social Status; Hunger and Famine; Literature of Food and Cooking; Tools for Cooking and Eating; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Calendars: Sacred and Profane; Carnival; Church Festivals and Processions; Weddings; *Religion and Beliefs*: Jews and Judaism; Monks and Monasteries; Nuns and Nunneries; *Science and Technology*: Glassmaking

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Fish. *See* Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy

FOOD PRESERVATION

No food remains edible forever, and most foodstuffs become rather inedible quickly: meat turns rancid, fruits get moldy, vegetables dry up or rot, bread gets stale then dries up or gets moldy. Much, perhaps most, Renaissance-era food was

consumed before these physical or chemical changes took place. But when there was a bumper crop, great catch, extraordinary slaughter, or large shipment of edibles, it was foolish to let nature take its course. Keeping food from spoiling over long winter months and when being shipped some distance also inspired the preservation of foods of all sorts, from meat and fish to herbs, fruits, and bread. The basic trick was to prevent the food from undergoing attack from bacteria, yeasts, molds, and fungi in the air. The food needed to be either directly sealed from the air or chemically changed so that germs found the new substance unappealing. Renaissance-era Italians had quite an arsenal of native and borrowed means of preserving foods. In general these involved cold temperature, drying or smoking, using salt or salt brine, fermenting, packing in oil, cooking or boiling, and packing in honey or sugar.

That very cold temperatures retard spoilage should surprise no one with a refrigerator and freezer. Italians had long used ice, snow, and ice-cold well, spring, and stream water whenever and wherever possible to preserve a wide range of foods. Very cool temperatures were also available underground in root cellars, where vegetables especially could be kept cool and dry but above freezing.

Drying removed the moisture that was necessary for most harmful microbes to thrive. Beans and some grains, such as rice, were dried for storage and later use, as were other vegetables and herbs. Bunches of basil or rosemary or bulbs of garlic were routinely hung in kitchens from special strings and hooks, and certain meat products hung drying in cool, dry attics. Grapes dried in the sun became raisins and small plums prunes. Twice-cooking biscuits dried them out and made soldiers' and sailors' hard and salty biscotti or the desirable sweet cookie with the same name. Once pasta made its appearance, it was either eaten fresh or dried for later use or for sale in special shops. Smoking dried out meats, cheeses, and fish (anchovies, sardines, sturgeon, eel, tuna, mackerel, and skate), usually in special rooms or small smokehouses. Smoking added distinctive flavors that became associated with the foods. Italians also developed a wide variety of long-lasting smoked and nonsmoked dry sausages using ground meat and herbs or spices. Salami, mortadella, and other processed meat products were high in salt and fat content and often developed into regional specialties. Over the course of the Renaissance they became acceptable at elite tables.

Packing in salt or salt brine also tended to dry foods by drawing out or replacing the natural moisture with salt. Beef, pork, venison, boar, mutton, and gooseflesh were routinely salted, as were numerous types of fish, including eel, herring, cod, trout, salmon, dolphin, shad, whiting mackerel, mullet, and pike. In Christian Italy the market for salted or dried fish heightened each year during the spring Lenten season that led up to Easter: the good Christian abstained from meat and fowl throughout the period, but was allowed fish of any kind. Pickling usually involved

salt brine mixed with vinegar and other flavors, and some vegetables were preserved in vinegar alone. Italians pickled a wide range of vegetables and even hard fruits: cucumbers, cabbage, asparagus, green beans, peas, root vegetables, and even lettuce appear in the records, as do fruits such as apples, pears, and plums. From the medical standpoint of the day, the salt helped to correct the patently cold and moist qualities of the fruits and made them less dangerous to eat.

Fermentation was another means of correcting the moist nature of grapes, pears, and apples, while preserving the fruit. Fermenting these produced wine, cider, and perry, and fermenting barley, wheat, and other grains produced beer of varying qualities. These were best kept in cool and dry locations, which is why beer and wine cellars, both private and commercial, became popular. Before pasteurization milk soured and then fermented quite rapidly. By controlling the process farmers and landowners produced excellent regional cheeses from the milk of cows, sheep, goats, and water buffalo. Some was left soft and eaten quickly, like mozzarella, and other varieties such as romano, pecorino, and parmesan were dried and used over months.

Sealing air out by submerging food in olive oil was an ancient means of preserving certain delicate foods. As today, tuna fish was stored in oil, a method that had little effect on the flavor of the flesh. Oddly, this was applied to other types of fish only late in the sixteenth century. In Genoa's region of Liguria porcini mushrooms were packed in olive oil when not dried. Ripe olives, too, though considered a peasant food, were stored in their own oil after the November harvest when not packed in brine or vinegar. Some fish were boiled first in myrtle broth and then packed for shipping in barrels with the broth. The same basic theory of sealing the air out applied to preserving fruits in honey or sugar syrups. Such jams, jellies, preserves, compotes, and marmalades had their origins among the Arabs. In Italy apothecaries first marketed medicinal electuaries and syrups, and it was a short step to using the same basic techniques for preserving fruit or its juice or peel. Customarily fruit was reserved for the upper classes, so the market prices of such products were high. Thus, they were confected on the landlord's estate, where they were used medicinally and otherwise reserved for his table. Preserving foods was not just an option; it provided some of Italy's most characteristic foods, from salamis and wines to pasta and parmesan cheese.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Retail Selling; Spice Trade; *Food and Drink*: Bread; Fruits and Vegetables; Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy

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FOODSELLERS AND MARKETS

Most of the food that landed on the tables of peasants, urban artisans, and Italian aristocrats had its origins in the local countryside. Many of the wealthy consumed the produce and livestock of their own estates, and some of what they ate they imported, such as regional wines, salamis, and cheeses, or exotic fruits or nuts. The poorest peasants might eat nothing more than what they could grow for themselves, while those who were better off could trade with neighbors or even buy a wider variety with proceeds from their sales at a local market. Though some farmers sold their wares to rural convents, inns, or fortresses, or at shrines, fairs, or military camps, retail food sales was largely an urban economic sector. Every town worthy of the name had a variety of shops (*botteghe*) that sold staples; one or more markets that sold fresh produce and livestock, or that specialized in a product such as fish; and numerous itinerant foodsellers who hawked their goods from carts or baskets wherever people gathered.

In 1288 poet and teacher Bonvesin de la Riva boasted that Milan had 300 bakers, 440 butchers, and 500 fishmongers for its population of about 80,000. Around 1500 Genoa had about 70,000 people and 70 cheese shops, in addition to less specialized food shops and cart-sellers that also sold cheese. Soft cheeses, like cottage cheese, would be sold from a cart or at the market as a fresh food, while shops would carry these and older, drier, and even aged cheese such as parmesan. A salumeria might sell cheeses along with dried, salted, and smoked meats, organ meats (brains, tripe, livers), hams, sausages, olive oil, and of course, salami. Fresh meats were purchased from the macellerie, which tended to be located near a waterway or gate outside the city. The butchers would have fresh veal and older, salted meat on hand for sale to households, and would slaughter meat bought on the hoof by customers from the city's livestock market. Without refrigeration most fresh meat had to be eaten on the day slaughtered, so its freshness was a matter of guild and civic laws. Most cities had regulations mandating that meat, like fish, be sold in the morning only. Older meats could be salted or pickled in brine, like corned beef, or otherwise spiced and processed for sale by the salumeria or macelleria. Fresh fish were sold in the market or by fishmongers with their own shops (*pescarii*). Italy's major cities were on a river or the sea or had a lake nearby, which could provide fresh daily catches of at least some edible fish. Freshwater fish were also grown in ponds and taken to market. Like butchers, fishmongers had to locate near the water or city gates for easy disposal of fishguts and old stock. Other pescherie specialized in salted, smoked, or otherwise-preserved fish. During the meatless season of Lent dried and salted cod came from as far away as Norway and by the later 1500s Newfoundland. Finally, bakers sold bread from their *panetterii* or forni (names for bread shops) and would also prepare and bake the flour—or just bake

the dough—brought by customers. Bread prices per loaf were usually set by the government, so as grain prices fluctuated, so did the size of the baker's standard loaf. Talented bakers also made and sold pastries and other sweets year-round and especially at festival times.

Markets were open-air affairs where buyers purchased grain or flour, processed and fresh meats, livestock, live and dead fish, fruits, vegetables, wine, oil, dairy products, and even prepared foods ready to eat. Whereas most shop owners were regulated by their respective guilds, almost anyone could hawk his wares at the market. Civic officials had to keep close watch over the sellers of all sorts of food to ensure that the quality of goods was high, that the prices charged were in line with governmentally set prices, and that the sellers paid their taxes. In Milan and Bologna, tax farmers paid the government a set amount and then collected it back from the sellers as taxes and fines, at a profit they hoped. Traditionally market prices floated with supply and demand and the quality of goods presented. By the sixteenth century inflation led to market price regulation enforced by the state. At regular intervals Mantua, Venice, Piacenza, Rome, Bologna, and Milan posted “just” prices on walls and gates, and at shops and stalls for foods such as meat—live and by the cut—bread, wine, fish, and flour. Market officials were also responsible for enforcing regulations and laws on the wholesomeness of food being sold and basic cleanliness of the market itself. Many of these were medieval in origin, and sanitation became a major issue after the Black Death. The fear that stench and putrefaction caused plague was a clear incentive. Officials also sought to curb fraud, such as employing false weights or measures, coloring stock to make it look fresh, and soaking dried fish in water to sell it as fresh.

Fraud

For medieval scholastic philosophers surrounded by the flower of chivalry, pride was worst of the seven deadly sins. In early Renaissance-era cities populated by buyers and merchants, greed—and its accomplice, fraud—was worst. Every seller from the peasant girl peddling eggs to the international cloth merchant was suspect. Products defective in materials, workmanship, condition, age, size/volume/weight, stated source, or 100 other qualities were sold as high quality and at a greater profit than “good and true” merchandise. Fraud consisted of false statements and intentional deceit; was immoral, sinful, and illegal; and landed perpetrators in the lowest level of Dante's “Inferno.”

People also peddled food from wheeled pushcarts or baskets, though regulating them was next to impossible. Many peddlers were shop boys or apprentices

to food shop owners. Their wares were probably inferior or old; otherwise they would be sold at the bottega. Women with gardens sometimes sold their vegetables and herbs, or other edibles such as homemade cheeses, from baskets they carried through the streets. While some cities allowed them to sell in markets, these *treccole* competed with the established produce sellers. In Bologna the *treccole* were banned until the market was about to close down, at which time the prices for everything perishable dropped significantly. These itinerant sellers, however, played an important role in providing food to people at prices that did not have to reflect guild regulations or market taxes.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work*: Grain Trade; Guilds; Retail Selling; Spice Trade; *Food and Drink*: Bread; Eating Out; Fruits and Vegetables; Grains and the Wheat Market; Hunger and Famine; Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy; Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices; Sugar and Confectioned Sweets; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; Taverns and Inns; *Religion and Beliefs*: Jews and Judaism

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FOREIGN FOODS

Renaissance-era Italy was a crossroads of trade and cultures. It was also a highly divided region with strong traditions of German and French influences in the northern and central reaches, Spanish, Greek, and Arab influences in the south, and Greek and Slavic in Venice. Before Italian unification in the 1860s, “foreign” could mean “from China” or “from the next village over.” A Trebbiano wine from the Veneto was a foreign import in Rome, and rice from the Po Valley was foreign to a Neapolitan. Breads, wines, cheeses, and sausages were distinctly regional. Even in the United States, Americans buy artisanal Tuscan bread, Genoa salami, bologna sausage, Chianti wine, and Parmesan cheese. Of interest here, however, are foods that did not have their origins in Italy but found their way to Italian tables.

While it may seem that only the wealthy could afford to consume imported foodstuffs, in fact during droughts and famines Italian cities routinely imported the most basic of staples, grains. Authorities understood that desperate and hungry

people were a tinderbox that could catch fire any time. As early as the 1340s Florentine officials imported grain to a public warehouse for distribution to the poor. At the end of our period, all of Italy suffered and grain was shipped from as far away as Poland. Wine, another staple, seems never to have been in short supply. Despite producing excellent varieties, Italian merchants routinely imported French vintages for those with refined palates. Greeks in Venice and Sicily preferred their own, as did Spaniards in Naples and Palermo. Cheeses reflected the animals from which the milk came, and the diet of the buffalo, cows, sheep, or goats. Even this staple was imported from the Netherlands as well as Venetian-controlled Dalmatia and Candia. Markets for such basics may have begun with foreign communities that sought to bring some of their home culture with them. Greek, German, Catalan, Spanish, Jewish, and other foreign cooks ran boarding houses and cooked what they could for their countrymen. Northern Italians highly regarded German cooks and cuisine. With printing came cookbooks and recipes for Catalan, French, English, and notably German dishes.

Italy derived a great deal from the Islamic world in what some consider a first wave of foreign imports. Some products could be grown in Italy, and others, such as spices and sugar, had to be continually imported. Rice, citrus fruits, melons, eggplants, artichokes, and other fruits and vegetables came initially from the eastern Mediterranean or its ports and found homes in Italian soil. Rice, originally from Asia, was grown in the Po Valley from the fifteenth century. Pasta, made from hard or durum wheat, also came to Italy from the Far East. Special pasta makers could charge up to three times the price of bread, so it was by no means the staple it is today. It was treated almost as a kind of confection, consumed by the wealthy or on special occasions. Though herbs were grown locally, spices by definition had to be imported. The medicinal properties imputed to a wide range of spices gave them a very high value, and northern European demand repaid whatever prices Venetian and Genoese merchants had to pay in Alexandria or Damascus.

The second round of importation began with European contact with the Americas. The so-called Columbian Exchange brought a wide range of new foodstuffs into Italy via Spanish and Portuguese shippers. Most American products could be transplanted to Italy, and some became regular features of Italian cooking. Maize or corn found a ready home in the Veneto region. Grown from the 1540s, it proved a useful grain, but its use in polenta had not really caught on by 1600. American peppers seemed to be obviously related to known spices, and physicians assumed they had the same medicinal properties. The tomato was readily grown, but it took a while for it to find a niche in the Italian diet. Some considered it poison, others an aphrodisiac. Was it a fruit or vegetable; what were its qualities (hot, cold, moist, dry); was it a medicine, and if so, what did it cure? It came to be used in salads, but the iconic Italian red sauce was still centuries away. The only American animal to

find its way to the Italian table early on was the turkey, which was seen to be related to the peacock and treated accordingly.

Italy's coasts, rivers, ponds, and lakes teemed with edible fish. Demand rose on Fridays and during the season of Lent, however, when authorities required abstinence from meat as a form of religious penance. French and Catalan fishermen regularly deposited fish in Genoa. English fishermen caught cod by the boatload off Newfoundland, salted it, and Italian merchants sold it as *baccalà*. From the Baltic came salted or smoked herring, and from Russian waters caviar.

A final category of imported food and drink was hot drinks: coffee, tea, and chocolate. Neither tea nor chocolate had any traction before 1600, but coffee had made some inroads by then. Adventurous Venetians were the first to embrace the juice of the bean and have been doing so ever since.



Annibale Carracci (1560–1646) was a pioneer in studies of simple people performing simple tasks. His *Pasta Vendor* (printed in 1646) is just such a genre work from either Bologna or Rome. The pasta is soft and wound around a spindle for convenience. (Everett Collection Historical/Alamy Stock Photo)

See also: *Economics and Work:* Imported Goods, Sources of; Spice Trade; Trade, Seaborne; *Family and Gender:* Health and Illness; *Food and Drink:* Diet and Social Status; Feasting and Fasting; Fruits and Vegetables; Grains and the Wheat Market; Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy; Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices; Wines

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Fowl. *See* Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Renaissance Italians cultivated a wide range of fruits and vegetables, and cooks prepared them in myriad ways. In 1419, Florentine patrician Buonaccorso Pitti listed Tuscan fruit-bearing trees as follows: figs, peaches, plums, cherries, almonds, apples, pears, pomegranates, quince, nuts, and olives. In general, fruit was destined for wealthy people's tables, while vegetables graced those of all classes. In 1596, English traveler Robert Dallington wrote that vegetables were "the most general food of the Tuscan . . . all sorts of persons, and at all times of the year." A mid-fifteenth-century law in Alessandria required all farmers to cultivate fruit trees but reserved their products for the landowners. At market, different fruits could command widely varying prices; in the mid-1390s in Prato near Florence, apples commanded 2 soldi per unit, while the far more fragile peaches fetched 28 soldi.

To Galenic physicians, fruit was naturally cold and moist and presented potential health problems if not served in or with warming wine, or salted, cooked, or



The Milanese *Trivulzio Tapestries* (ca. 1503–1509 by il Bramantino [ca. 1480–1530] and Benedetto da Milano) allegorize the months of the year, surrounding the central figure with appropriate agricultural produce. October features baskets of fruits and vegetables, including the pears clearly shown here. (Sergio Anelli/Electa/Mondadori Portfolio via Getty Images)

otherwise processed. Fruits appeared at healthy tables as preserves, jams, pies and tarts, fritters, and jellies, and in sauces or mixed with all sorts of meat, fish, and other dishes. Of course, raw fruit could be medicinal—a corrective to an otherwise hot and dry meal or diet. Some fruits, such as watermelon, apples, pears, or chestnuts, made a fine after-meal purgative. Apricots, peaches, plums, figs, cherries, and melons that supposedly aided digestion preceded a meal, and cantaloupe wrapped in prosciutto remains a classic Italian appetizer. Serving it without the ham, however, was dangerous because melons were considered the most poisonous of fruits; they were believed to be responsible for the death of Pope Paul II in 1471. Drying juicy fruits also reduced the moistness in, and increased the shelf life of, citrus peels, figs, grapes, plums, apricots, and cherries.

The olive was nearly as iconic a Mediterranean food as bread and wine. Fourteenth-century Genoa shipped Calabrian and Campanian olive oil, and Venice that from Puglia, around Italy and to northern Europe. By 1400, mature olive groves dotted the peninsula, and local fruit was available nearly everywhere. Since young oil is lighter and fruitier tasting, oil for cooking and consumption was pressed from unripe olives. The practices of producing and storing oil developed as a matter of local custom, and not until 1574 was a reliable and first-rate process published. Farmers grew many varieties of black, green, and beige-colored olives, but as food they were considered fit only for peasants. After the harvest and pressing in mid-November, farmers, to preserve them, salt-cured ripened black olives and soaked others in brine or lye.

Oranges were a specialty and an often-imported fruit, although before the fifteenth century Italy only knew bitter oranges. These needed to be cooked or candied in honey or sugar like marmalade. Naturally sweet oranges arrived in the 1400s, including the red-pulped blood oranges of Sicily, and Italy's first indoor orangery appeared at the Tuscan Villa Palmieri about 1450. Southern Italy also produced and exported naturally sour lemons, limes, and citrons. Few fruits had as many varieties as Renaissance-era pears; in a seventeenth-century Tuscan painting, 115 recognizable varieties appear. In a fourteenth-century poem, Piero Cantarini mentioned sementine, carvelle, spinose, rogie, rubuiole, sanichole, zuchaje, cianpoline, and durrelle pears; and other Italian varieties included bergamot, muscat, medlar, gnocchi, ghiacciuoli, and garzagnuolo. Inventories, recipes, and menus mention many more fruits, including strawberries, figs, grapes and raisins, apricots, gooseberries, jujube, and cornel berries. Other countries contributed dried fruits, such as dates, almonds, pistachios, and dried prunes. Tomatoes arrived in Italy from Mexico via Spain and the earliest surviving mention is dated October 31, 1548. The Medici Grand Duke had grown some red and yellow tomatoes at his villa. Although named pomodori, golden apples, people thought them a type of eggplant, an unhealthy fruit. Doctors considered them moist and cold, easily putrefying in the body and

causing disease. Renaissance Italians only thought of frying slices in oil with corrective salt, as with eggplant, until tomato sauce appeared much later.

By 1614, Italian expatriate Giacomo Castelvetro could mention 84 varieties of vegetables for his English readers. Among them were roots and a variety of leafy bunches, legumes, zucchini, artichokes, asparagus, cucumbers, fennel, cauliflower, celery, kohlrabi, broccoli, gourds and pumpkins, truffles, and seven types of mushrooms. Roots such as radishes, horseradish, onions, purple-red or vermillion carrots, turnips, or parsnips were sliced or chopped and boiled, mashed, pan-fried, grilled whole in embers by peasants, or stuffed in fowl for the lord's table. For a source of cheap and easily stored protein, peasants ate a variety of broad beans, peas, chickpeas, lima beans, pulses, fava beans, and lentils, often in soups. Sixteenth-century upper classes developed a taste for beans, which were fried in oil and flavored with onions, herbs, or meat strips. Field greens and various types of lettuce grew quickly and were readily available to country-dwellers or those with gardens, and brought high prices in urban markets because of their easy spoilage. At day's end, a city's poor would buy up the day's remainder cheap. Spinach migrated to Italy from its Andalusian and Persian roots in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and cabbage gained respectability somewhat later. In 1519, Isabella d'Este of Mantua sent a number of heads of cabbage to her brother the duke of Ferrara, including instructions on how to prepare them.

The Olive off the Table

Cultivation began in the Fertile Crescent, arrived in Italy with the Etruscans, flourished among the Romans, and all but disappeared after the barbarians flooded across the Alps in the early Middle Ages. Monasteries preserved small groves, and by the fourteenth century trade in olive oil had revived. Heavy and foul-tasting oil from ripe fruit, such as olives fallen from branches, was used in oil lamps and for chrism (for ritual anointing) by the Church. The versatile product was also used in making soap, lubricating wool before carding, and as a base for medicinal unguents.

Salads drizzled in oil and flavored with medicinally valuable herbs appeared on Renaissance tables high and low, especially during the meat-free season of Lent. Cookbooks featured many variations, such as those of Castelvetro: nasturtium, basil, salad burnet, tarragon, borage flowers, flowers of buckhorn, plantain, and young fennel shoots; or rocket, sorrel leaves, lemon balm and tender lettuce leaves, rosemary flowers, and sweet violets dressed with salt, oil and vinegar. For a special occasion, one might include white endive, blanched chicory shoots, raisins,

angelica, unpitted olives, capers, thin slices of ox tongue, candied citron and lemon peel, green onions, radishes, horseradish, and/or alexander shoot. In his c.1570 “Letter on salad greens and plants,” sixteenth-century botanist and chef Costanzo Felici of Le Marche also recommended flavoring mixed salad with honey, syrup, or sugar.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work*: Imported Goods, Sources of; Retail Selling; *Food and Drink*: Diet and Social Status; Feasting and Fasting; Foodsellers and Markets; Galenic Health Regimens; Hunger and Famine; Sugar and Confectioned Sweets; *Housing and Community*: Gardens; *Science and Technology*: Agriculture and Agronomy; Botany and Botanical Illustration

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GALENIC HEALTH REGIMENS

Galen was a second-century AD physician trained in the Greek traditions of Hippocrates and Aristotle. His writings on most aspects of medicine heavily influenced both Byzantine and Arabic medieval medical systems. These, in turn, had a profound impact on the formal, learned medical education, writing, and practice in Italy from the twelfth century. Late medieval and early Renaissance-era medical schools at Salerno, Naples, Bologna, Pavia, Padua, and Pisa trained physicians in Galenic medicine as transmitted by Arab scholars. In the early 1500s humanists who read Greek printed all of Galen’s original works, which gave even more force to his teachings. At heart was the Hippocratic idea that human health depended on both “natural” bodily conditions and certain “non-natural” things that the body did or that were done to it. Keeping all of these “balanced,” given the age, gender, occupation, and other aspects of the person, was the physician’s job. A regimen was a set of recommendations that a doctor provided when asked, usually to address some health issue. This was often laid out in a formal, personal report called a *consilium* (see the document “A Fifteenth-Century Physician’s Dietary and Medical Regimen, (1482)”) or more generically in book form.

A body's naturals began with the "elements" earth, air, fire, and water; each element had a corresponding "quality" of warmth and humidity (see chart of humoral qualities). How these were balanced in the body constituted its "complexion." The body also possessed a certain mix of four humors—blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm—often imagined as fluids that, along with specific organs, also corresponded to the qualities and contributed to the body's overall complexion and health. Other naturals included additional body parts (members), an animating principle that flowed through arteries called spiritus, and the body's functions and activities (virtues and operations).

Age, gender, and even social class could affect complexion—older folks were dryer, women were more moist, and scholars cold and dry—and therefore affect health. The six "non-naturals," however, could be directly adjusted to help keep humors and elements in balance, and therefore complexion healthy, or to rebalance and restore health. These were air, bodily exertion, sleep, food and drink, evacuation of waste, and emotional state or passions, including sexual activity. Balance, regularity, and moderation of these were the goals. Regimens would be quite different for a young boy with breathing problems, a mature pregnant woman, or an older but healthy woman. As the accompanying chart shows, planets and seasons also had their place in this scheme, and the calendar, almanac, and patient's horoscope might provide important information: for example, when to begin a treatment or harvest needed ingredients.

As our example consilium demonstrates (see document "A Fifteenth-Century Physician's Dietary and Medical Regimen, (1482)"), a physician had many tools to affect complexion: pills, syrups, clysters, and a topical wash; others included alternative types of enemas and controlled bleeding (phlebotomy) to reduce excess blood. The dietary regimen, here—and often—the longest section of the consilium, was especially powerful. If followed it supposedly removed harmful foods, increased helpful ones, and had an effect several times every day. Food and drink, like every other physical object, were believed to be made of earth, air, fire, and/or water. As such, each food type had certain qualities of warmth and humidity. A regimen sought to avoid foods that were generally incompatible with any human body, and those that added to an imbalance in a particular instance. For example, many fish and some fruits were considered too moist to be digested properly, and instead putrefied in the stomach. Vegetables were not easily digested by the nobleman's sensitive digestive tract and were thus to be avoided. Were he a peasant, they would present no problems. The opposite was true of fowl and young animal flesh. Other food recommendations would be made according to age, gender, and signs of humoral imbalances, such as fevers or indigestion. One problem with this system was that physicians did not always agree on the quality of a given food, and this was especially the case as new ones entered the menu from Asia or the Americas.

Spices played a role as both powerful food flavorings and humor-balancing medicine. Originally imported as medicinal ingredients and sold through apothecary shops, spices eventually found their way into Italian cuisine, always to be used with caution.

Michele Savonarola was physician to Ferrara's Marquis Borso d'Este in the mid-1450s. He wrote a small book-length regimen for Borso but also a specialized one for Ferrara's pregnant women and younger children. In both cases these regimens, like many others that were published, were meant as preventive and prescriptive: what one should eat (and do) to maintain good health. Whether they were followed is, of course, another story. The same is true of the personalized consilia, usually drawn up specifically for one with impaired health. Collections of these, even from the fourteenth century, were printed well into the sixteenth century. New regimens continued to appear, such as that by Ravenna's Tommaso Rangone, whose 1550 manual was advertised as "How to live to 120." Cooks at Italy's major courts also displayed knowledge of humoral considerations in their cookbooks, making health claims for dishes and menus. By the later sixteenth century, though, such considerations were largely dropped. Galen, if not humoralism, had come under attack from about 1550, and whereas the Galenic advice was for each to eat according to his or her complexion (if moist/warm eat moist/warm), after 1550 advice often contradicted this (if moist/warm eat dry/cold).

The Humors

From the fifth century BC, physicians developed the set of relationships among people and their cosmic environment displayed below. Each set of supernatural planets, natural elements and seasons, and human humors, organs, life stages, and dominant character or moods were all linked or distinguished by the four basic qualities. These supposed relationships formed the basis of Renaissance understandings of health and internal medicine.

<i>HUMOR</i>	<i>CHARACTER</i>	<i>ORGAN</i>	<i>AGE</i>	<i>QUALITIES</i>	<i>ELEMENT</i>	<i>SEASON</i>	<i>PLANET</i>
Blood	sanguine	Liver	child	warm/moist	Air	Spring	Jupiter
Yellow Bile*	choleric	Spleen	youth	warm/dry	Fire	Summer	Mars
Black Bile*	melancholic	Gall Bladder	mature	cold/dry	Earth	Fall	Saturn
Phlegm	phlegmatic	Brain/Lungs	old	cold/moist	Water	Winter	Moon

*Latin "*choleric*."

But books and physicians—not to say chefs—were stuff of elite classes. It may be safe to say that certain pieces of the learned model of medicine, such as humors, trickled down to the masses. But it is safer to say that among the lower

classes foods that were available and affordable were consumed, and when one was sick one consulted the healer on whom the community depended. For these folks, experience rather than book learning counted.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; *Food and Drink*: Diet and Social Status; Fruits and Vegetables; Literature of Food and Cooking; Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy; Nutrition: A Modern Assessment; Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices; Wine; *Housing and Community*: Gardens; Physicians; *Science and Technology*: Botany and Botanical Illustration; Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Plague Treatises and Consilia; *Primary Document*: A Fifteenth-Century Physician's Dietary and Medical Regimen: Ugo Benzi. Physician's Consilium #91 (1482)

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GRAINS AND THE WHEAT MARKET

For most Renaissance-era Italians grains of various kinds provided the bulk of calories and nutrition. Modern scholars estimate that for the adult male requiring 3,000 calories daily, grains provided between 50% and 75%. Though wheat bread may come immediately to our modern minds, only the era's well-off dined on it. Bread and other dishes made of spelt, millet, rice, barley, buckwheat, rye, oats, and even chestnuts and a variety of legumes took their place on tables of the peasant and urban laborer.

Though wheat was often imported, most grains, including wheat, were consumed very close to where they were grown. Generally cheap, bulky, and susceptible to rot, wheat arrived by packhorse, cart, or ship only when the price was relatively high. To make bread, the lower classes extended expensive wheat flour, when they could get it, with flour ground from any combination of several grains: spelt and rye were most common, but barley, oats and even chestnut

flour—especially in mountainous areas—often appeared. Boiling whole grains in soups, polenta, gruels, and porridges was far easier and saved the cost and effort of milling grains into flour. When local prices of wheat rose to exorbitant levels or wheat disappeared from markets altogether, even the cheaper grains were shipped in as replacement.

Rice was an import from Asia and, in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, could be purchased through Majorca. In the fifteenth century the wetlands of the Po River valley in Lombardy proved ideal for cultivating the crop. Similarly irrigated areas all the way to Sicily also began growing rice, usually on large estates. Peasants ate it locally, but as a commercial product it was exported and found its way to the kitchens of the wealthy. Cooked in broth it became risotto, but ground into flour it was an extender for other grain flours in bread for the famine-stricken or poor. Buckwheat was another imported grain, though it never appeared on fancy tables. Originating north of the Alps, its fine performance in poor soils recommended it to many peasants. Never a cash crop, peasants learned to make “gray polenta” of buckwheat, to boil it into gruel or porridge, and to use it with other grain flours to make a kind of pancake.

Peasants throughout Italy grew millet. The hardy grain could be stored safely for up to ten years. A versatile foodstuff, it could be mixed with other grains to make non-wheat bread. During the War of Chioggia (1378–81) all Venetian classes relied on millet, as did Vicenza’s population when wheat disappeared in 1564–1565. Blended with legumes such as lentils, chickpeas, and peas, millet was the original base for polenta. Peasants and urban poor also used it in porridge and gruel. Columbus brought corn (maize) to Spain in 1493, and by the later 1530s peasants in the Veneto were the first Italians to adopt it. They grew it in gardens for themselves, calling it “fat millet.” Like millet it also served as poultry feed and eventually replaced the older, native grain in polenta. If one considers how many grains a single seed produces, its advantage over most other grains is clear. Eventually it became Italy’s chief grain only after wheat.

Italian wheat production centered on Sicily and Apulia, with smaller local production spread across the peninsula. Because wheat took so much from the soil, each year of production was followed by a fallow year for manuring; so only half of that available was actually used in any given year. Unlike modern strains, a later fifteenth-century seed produced on average only five more; this was up to 6.3 a century later. And all wheat was not equal. Florence’s markets recognized three grades: local or Sicilian *grani forti* or *cima* was finest; mixed (*mezzano*) came next in quality and price; and *deboli* was an inferior grade of smaller grains from the Middle East, Abruzzi, Urbino, or Spain. Indeed, Sienese preacher San Bernardino warned that “there are those who sell grain and show a sample that is clean and of quality, but it is not that which they give them.” Fourteenth-century Florence

was importing 5,000 to 10,000 tons of Sicilian wheat annually even in non-famine years and despite population decline due to plague. Locally, wars and raids, floods, droughts, and epidemics that swept away workers necessitated imported wheat.

Sixteenth-century population growth, urbanization, and the Italian wars fed commercial wheat. Much swampy land was reclaimed or taken from pasturage or other crops and planted with wheat as speculators and peasants alike counted on high prices. Cities stockpiled the grain against siege or natural disaster. By 1602, Venice had 44 grain warehouses storing millet as well as wheat. Much came from the Levant and Istanbul in ships carrying 300- to 600-ton cargoes. One study suggests that Genoa and Venice together imported 28,000 tons of eastern wheat in 1551 in ships averaging 300 tons, requiring some 94 shiploads. In the mid-1500s Egypt alone was exporting 40,320 tons of wheat, barley, and beans to Italian ports despite official (Turkish) restrictions. During hard times northern grain ships arrived from Antwerp and England, and both Hamburg and Danzig sent wheat to Tuscany during the cold and rain-soaked 1580s and 1590s, when even Sicilian production suffered. In Florence, Venice, and Genoa profits of 300% to 400% could be obtained. Even the well-supplied markets of Modena saw annual price averages fly from 150 soldi per staro in 1588 to 360 four years later.

Pasta

Pasta (“dough”) was ancient but the Renaissance updated it. Arabs used hard (durum) wheat and dried it for export, but it took forever to cook until late medieval Italians began boiling it; Italians prepared it fresh, stuffing it with cheap meats, cheeses, and herbs, like little pies. Layering flat sheets between cheese layers (lasagna) was another early use, and pushing it through holes in a bronze disk to create strings came later. Commercial production required a large machine to knead 110-pound dough balls, and pasta-maker guilds appeared only in late sixteenth-century: Naples (1571), Genoa (1574), and Savona (1577).

Across the sixteenth century Sicily annually provided Genoa some 20 shiploads totaling 8,000 tons of wheat. Palermo was Sicily’s business center, but grain flowed regularly from 11 depots located along the northern Sicilian coastline. The Apulian ports of Manfredonia, Foggia, and Trani exported grain regularly to Venice, Naples, and Ragusa. As with any product, when production was high the price dropped as did producers’ incomes. As wheat production was increasingly commercialized, poorer growers who depended on credit for seed, expansion, or even food for their families found themselves trapped in good years when foreign demand and local grain prices fell.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Mezzadria; Retail Selling; Trade, Seaborne; Trade Routes, Overland; *Food and Drink*: Bread; Food Preservation; Foodsellers and Markets; Hunger and Famine; *Housing and Community*: Transportation, Local; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: War and Civilians; *Science and Technology*: Ships and Shipbuilding

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Herbs. *See* Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices

HUNGER AND FAMINE

Some individuals suffered from hunger at all times and in all places in Italy during the Renaissance era. Hunger did not mean that one had no food, which would be a matter of starvation, but that one had too little food to satisfy the body’s basic requirements. The peasant family that relied entirely on local food production and storage routinely had to marshal its supply very carefully as late winter and early spring months unfolded. No one needed the culture’s many proverbs and folk tales to remember the seasons’ cycles. Urban poor who had to beg for sustenance or working poor fallen on seasonal or economic downturns in employment or crippling injuries had to rely on the generosity of others for either money with which to buy food or gifts of bread. During war or an epidemic rural people poured into nearby cities for protection or charitable aid. These both disrupted the production and supply of food from the countryside and put great strains on stored supplies. An attacker’s best weapon against a city was to block food supplies and starve the defenders into submission.

Giovanni Battista Segni wrote in 1591, in the early stage of a peninsula-wide, decade-long famine, “Hunger is crueller than the plague, because man is in need for much longer.” The need, or failure to satisfy the body’s needs, had profound physical and psychological effects on people. Malnourishment deprived the body of nutrients necessary to fight off sickness and disease, and to recover from illness. Energy levels dropped, so that sustained physical labor was impossible, and people ignored even basic hygiene. Hunger thus had a dehumanizing effect. The hungry looked, acted, even smelled different from other people, and they were more

than willing to eat food normally reserved for animals. Children raised in deprivation were often stunted physically, intellectually, and psychologically. Adults, too, suffered psychologically and emotionally, as senses dulled and mental acuity dropped. Some turned in desperation to deception, violence, or thievery, as their morals decayed. Despite the norm of Christian pity and love for the hungry, many in society reacted with revulsion, blaming the hungry themselves for their plight.

Because of the Christian norms, however, others sought to fulfill the Gospel injunction to feed to the hungry, one of the seven acts of mercy. Traditionally monastic houses, friars, and bishops provided food for those needing it, and many monasteries, convents, and bishops' palaces continued to be centers of charity. From the fourteenth century on wealthy laypeople and both urban and rural lay organizations such as confraternities provided for the hungry, at least those deemed worthy of their gifts. They screened out the lazy but able-bodied, the criminal, immoral, and frauds, and targeted "shamefaced" (*vergognosi*) needy, help for whom was considered "good charity." Because people faced with hunger became desperate and violent, cities such as Florence kept large supplies of grain to satisfy the needs of the hungry in emergencies.

The true food emergency occurred when famine swept the land, as it did in the 1590s. Famines were rare up to about 1500 as plague kept populations relatively stable. Sixteenth-century population growth put pressures on food supplies, as did the flow of war: Pavia, for example, suffered famines in 1476, 1503–1504, 1518–1519, 1525–1526, 1528–1529, 1531, 1539–1540, 1544–1545, 1562, and 1590–1593. Crop-threatening cold, lack of rain, flooding, or infestations could ruin crops of all types, from hearty grains and roots to delicate fruits. One growing season's disaster reduced or eliminated the seed needed for the next. Animals suffered from lack of fodder or feed. Imported food, when available, was expensive relative to local offerings. Prices in towns and cities rose, which drew what produce—even "low" grains and vegetables—there was in the country into the urban markets and away from rural areas. The well-off hoarded what they could, and the rural hungry sought charity in towns, taxing whatever remained of clerical or lay resources. Opportunistic diseases often accompanied famines, which put even heavier demands on communities and reduced the rural workforce when good conditions returned. Renaissance-era Italy had normally reliable food supplies, due in part to very good transportation networks and a commercial infrastructure that made buying and selling foodstuffs, especially grain, an easy matter. This is until all of Italy suffered from famine-inducing environmental problems.

In fall 1589 Tuscany, Campania, and the area around Rome suffered serious flooding. Spring brought heavy rains to Emilia, the Veneto, and Lombardy, with all of Italy suffering from lower temperatures: the early stage of the "Little Ice Age." The failures of grain and grapes, which were both cash and subsistence

crops, meant that farmers lacked both food and the money to buy it. Dire conditions continued into 1591 and 1592, with only spotty recovery in 1593. Across northern Italy burial rates doubled, while births dropped by 44% due to mothers' deaths and miscarriages. Between 1587 and 1595 Bologna's population fell by 18%, while that in its suburbs lost 21%. Some of this was a matter of policy, as the city expelled its poor in 1590, at the same time that Naples drove out its students and "foreigners." Merchants scoured the Mediterranean for wheat and other inferior grains; they purchased wheat from as far away as Poland and the Black Sea, and at prices that reflected the costs of such long-distance transportation. Local bakers faced with small supplies and/or very high costs for flour became the focus of popular distrust, anger, and violence. More generally, desperate people turned to theft or banded together to commit crimes and find food any way they could. Peasants often abandoned their land, taking animals with them, and small owners sold out to wealthy or "foreign" investors who consolidated their new holdings.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Trade, Seaborne; *Food and Drink*: Bread; Diet and Social Status; Food Preservation; Foodsellers and Markets; Galenic Health Regimens; Grains and the Wheat Market; Nutrition: A Modern Assessment; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Poor, Aid to; Poverty and the Poor; Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; Crime and Punishments; Mercenaries; Soldiers; War and Civilians; *Science and Technology*: Agriculture and Agronomy; Diseases and Humoral Medicine

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Liquor. See Wines

LITERATURE OF FOOD AND COOKING

Renaissance-era Italy provides us with a wide range of sources for understanding what people ate and why, and how they prepared and served it. Records of ships' cargoes, market prices, banquet menus, travelers' accounts of meals, sumptuary laws, folktales and proverbs, estate inventories, letters, paintings, even sermons

against gluttony contain explicit information or vital clues about their culinary state. When famine struck, court and urban chroniclers related the shifts in eating habits that affected rich and poor alike. From the invention of printing in 1454 another set of sources slowly emerged. This was a literature of food and cookery written by the literate for the literate (read upper classes). It included books on medical aspects of foods and diet (discussed elsewhere in this volume), on agriculture and related fields of food processing (e.g., wine, cheeses, olive oil pressing), recipe books and menus by chefs at Italy's courts, and descriptions of courses served at wedding or other festival banquets. Much of this material has been published in modern editions, some of these have been translated into English.

Great food began with carefully produced ingredients. Renaissance-era writers on cultivation, villa management, and crop processing were vindicated since Classical Romans such as Columella and Pliny had written about similar "low" subjects. Such works constituted a new type of literature, and were meant as practical manuals. They were published by amateur botanists and estate owners and managers. In 1564 Agostino Gallo of Brescia produced *Ten Days of Agriculture and the Pleasure of the Villa* that blended both noble and economic rural pursuits. Contemporarily the Florentine Giovanni Vettorini wrote his *Treatise on Trees*, discussing all aspects of arboriculture, from successful varieties of fruits to proper soil and effective planting. Also in the 1560s Venetian Pier Vettori wrote a short book on the proper way to press unripe olives for oil, and medical professor and physician to the Duke of Savoy Pantaleone da Confienza composed a "summa" or encyclopedia in Latin on all things dairy, the *Summa lacticiniorum*. Thirty-two of his 40 chapters deal with cheese, and he provided the first comprehensive list of Italy's regional cheese types as well as notes on how to produce them.

The cooks who penned the era's many recipes included information on cooking tools and techniques, supposed medicinal qualities of ingredients, considerations of presentation at table, or menu-planning principles, and some notes on distinguishing qualities of meat and produce. Italian recipe (ricetta; derived from *recipe* in Latin, "to choose or take") collections (ricettarii) date from around 1300 and depended on French models. The early fourteenth-century *Libro di cucina* (cook book) originated in Naples, and opened with essentially peasant recipes for vegetable dishes and the means of "ennobling" them with expensive spices. A much later printed edition ran to 72 pages and contained 135 recipes, usually for "XII" people. The next major work was Master Martino de Rossi's *Book on the Art of Cooking*, published in Rome in 1465 and reprinted 15 times in the 1500s. The Master was a Lombard chef who had worked at Milan's Sforza court and for high clergy in Rome. He knew and influenced Roman humanist and courtier Platina, whose *On Honest Pleasure and Good Health* appeared in 1469. Platina borrowed 95% of Master Martino's content, which comprised 40% of Platina's. His "*Honest*"

and “*Good*” were justified by the humanist’s extended sermon on moderation in dining and other stoic virtues. Before 1517 eight Latin editions were published in Italy, and by 1600, 15 were printed in French, seven in German, and five in Italian.

Sixteenth-century authors included the administrators who oversaw the production and presentation of dozens of dishes at Italy’s aristocratic courts. Cristoforo Messisbugo had just such a position at the Ferrara court of Ercole II d’Este, and he produced a cookbook, *The New Book* in which one learns to make every sort of dish according to the changes of the seasons, both meat and fish, and the broader *Banquets* in 1549. The 300-plus recipes and dishes in *Banquets* are typical of the Ferrara region, but, like the papal chef Bartolomeo Scappi, Messisbugo piles them into menus, while reflecting on how a proper banquet should unfold, from tools and personnel to the proper ordering of courses. Domenico Romoli’s *The Singular Doctrine of the Office of the Scalco* [Steward] (1560) is an 800-page compendium of all things food for a great household; it was followed by the somewhat-shorter *The Steward* of Giovanni Battista Rosetti in 1584. The captain of the table at any feast was Il Triciante, the Carver. In 1581 Vincenzo Cervio wrote the ultimate manual for carvers, *Il triciante*, covering every aspect of knives and the carving and serving of every possible cut of meat.

Bartolomeo Scappi

Born perhaps near Lake Maggiore around 1500, Scappi no doubt cooked for nobles and cardinals before becoming a papal chef in 1536. Until 1566 he served five popes, dedicating his *Works on the Art of Cooking* to Pius V in 1570. Writing as and for “ourselves, the cooks of Rome,” he created an encyclopedic work that includes discourses on the cook as judicious architect and artist; proper stocking of the kitchen (stoves, ovens, tools); selection of the best fresh ingredients; over 100 banquet menus; and 1,022 recipes using foods and terms from Rome, Naples, Lombardy, Venice, Genoa, and Emilia.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries recipe books appeared that specialized in regional dishes, while others used terms such as “alla Milanese” or “Bolognese.” But none of these reflects a clear sense of the features of regional specialization that so naturally come to the modern traveler’s mind. In 1548 Ortensio Lando published his *Commentary on the Most Famous and Prodigious Things about Italy and Other Places*. He provided a fictive itinerary from Sicily to the north within which he discussed the best wines and characteristic fine dishes to be encountered in each place. Finally, in major cities such as Florence, Venice, and Rome, major festivals of state, especially unusual ones such as weddings or state visits

by royalty, included lavish banquets. These were often commemorated by printed pamphlets called *livrets*, of which menus of the feasts were often a part, and some of these have survived.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender*: Families, Noble and Patrician; *Fashion and Appearance*: Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drink*: Conduct at Table; Feasting and Fasting; Fruits and Vegetables; Galenic Health Regimens; Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy; Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices; Sugar and Confectioned Sweets; Tools for Cooking and Eating; Wines; *Housing and Community*: Palazzi; Villas

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Markets. *See* Foodsellers and Markets

MEAT, FOWL, FISH, EGGS, AND DAIRY

Animal protein played an important role in the Italian diet, but its presence was proportional to a person's wealth. Fresh meat, fowl, and fish were generally too expensive for the lower urban classes, and growing commercial markets meant that most meat sources were taken to slaughter in town. Fish and fowl also went to town or were eaten at the landlord's table, unless poached by cheeky peasants. Unlike flesh, eggs and dairy products appeared for the eating every day, assuming one had a cow and chickens, and these complemented the bread and vegetables typical of peasant fare.

Meat may be divided into old and young, fresh and processed, wild (boar, deer, hare, porcupine, hedgehog) and domesticated (beef, pork, mutton, goat, rabbit). In general, meat was reserved for the tables of the wealthy. It was usually eaten the

same day as slaughtered, especially in towns, whose butchers' guilds were required to market only freshly killed and butchered meats. Even so, the papal chef Bartolomeo Scappi recommended one to two days aging for beef, a bit more if it were winter. Older meat could be kept or sold as salted or dried (jerky) or processed into sausages and other products. Elites preferred fresh young animal meat such as veal—though lamb was still something of a novelty—while the meat of older animals grown to breed or for wool or milk was either processed or left to institutions or the working or poor classes. Cities consumed whole herds of cattle daily. Sixteenth-century Neapolitan butchers slaughtered 30,000 cattle annually for its population of about 210,000, and shiploads of cattle were offloaded on Venice's Lido Island, where at other times plague victims were housed and artillery tested. Venice's poor dined on organ meats. Poorer rural folk also consumed old horse, mule, oxen, and donkey flesh.

Fish and fowl, too, could be wild or domesticated. From the barnyards of rich and poor came geese, ducks, pigeons, and chickens, while free-flying birds (water fowl, stork, pheasant, quail, dove) were considered the finest of foods because they lived furthest from the ground. Turkey arrived very late, appearing in Genoese shops only in the 1580s. Though some fish were “farmed” in ponds (crayfish, eels, lamprey, carp, tench), most were caught from rivers or at sea. When sold, big fleshy fish such as tuna and eels could bring prices 10 to 20 times that of meat. Freshwater carp, tench, sturgeon, pike, eels, and river shrimp were sold fresh at market, while most salt-water varieties (octopi, oysters, sardines, cod, tuna, skate) had to be consumed very close to where they were caught unless salted or otherwise



Between 1503 and 1509, Bartolomeo Suardi (aka Il Bramantino; ca. 1480–1530) designed and Benedetto da Milano wove a set of 12 wool and silken tapestries representing the months. Known as the *Trivulzio Tapestries*, they feature the agricultural produce of the Trivulzio homeland. December features a huge cauldron in which sausages are being boiled to be served in the waiting bowl, while two hogs feed on acorns while awaiting slaughter. (Electa/Mondadori Portfolio via Getty Images)

preserved. Except in seaside villages, most fish and fowl ended up on the tables of the well-off, whether in the city or country: the best always went to market or the master's table. Elite cookbooks are filled with recipes for meat, fish, and fowl, and many combine them in ways we would find bizarre. Most meats, however, were probably grilled on a spit over an open fire until the juices stopped running. Some visitors to Italy complained of the practice of first boiling then roasting, and some cookbooks suggest inserting lard before grilling to enhance moistness.

Eggs, including those of chicken, ducks, geese, and other fowl, were a cheap and ready form of protein. They were nutritious, easily prepared, and quite versatile. Like dairy products and fish, eggs were legal to eat during the Christian season of Lent in place of meat. The earliest Renaissance-era cookbook recommends eggs soft- and hard-boiled, fried, scrambled, grilled, in a torte, and with spinach. A typical treatment was in a frittata of beaten eggs and grated cheese, fried in lard or oil. Traditionally a peasant food, eggs made a Renaissance comeback in elite recipes for soups, sauces, custards, pastry, and omelets. Physicians approved eggs, as they considered them to be the humorally perfect food.

Dairy may be a misnomer here, for Renaissance-era Italians consumed the milk products of several mammals, including cows, sheep, goats, and water buffalo. As an ingredient, papal courtier Platina in his 1470 cookbook ranked goat milk highest in quality, then ewe's, and cow's last. In the countryside all manner of milk was drunk fresh, but in the absence of refrigeration or pasteurization milk was usually processed. Human milk was, of course, consumed directly by infants, but it was also considered appropriate for the elderly—when properly served. Churned butter, which also required cool temperatures, was far more typical north rather than south of the Alps, where olive oil served many of the same high-fat content culinary purposes. Butter made inroads during the later 1500s, though, as cattle herds became larger and more ubiquitous.

Processed Meats

Some of Italy's quintessential foods are the preserved meats that date at least to the Renaissance era. Fatty pork was essential to salsiccia (sausage), salami, pancetta (unsmoked bacon), and prosciutto (ham). More finely ground and dotted with globs of fat was mortadella, of which modern bologna is a sad descendant. Beef, wild game, and even old mule meat was salted, ground with pork, and flavored with local herbs. Sausage was the most varied product, and every region had its own variety, such as Milan's cervelati, which featured pig's brain and blood, which were far from unusual ingredients.

Cheese (*formaggio*) is essentially soured milk whose solid curds are usually drained of their liquid whey. It can be as soft and fresh as cottage cheese or as aged, dry, and hard as parmesan. It was a traditional peasant food, but chefs and travelers ennobled it, so mid-fifteenth-century poet Antonio Beccadeli could write “In Praise of Cheese” in the voice of a peasant-made *pecorino* (sheep cheese). A century later Count Guidolandi wrote “La Formaggiata” in a pastoral vein, depicting gentle, beautiful shepherdesses using “caressing movements” to shape the cow cheese known as parmesan (of Parma). In fact, cheese-making was as close to a science and business as wine-making was. The animals’ milk was affected by soil and diet, as well as the additives used for coagulating the curds, the treatment of both curds and whey, and the salting, drying, and aging processes if any. As a result, Italians made a multitude of varieties of cheeses, with parmesan considered the best by French and Italians alike, followed by the Florentine ewe’s cheese *marzolino*, while southern Italy’s cow’s milk-based *caciocavallo* and Sicily’s *salso* found markets across the Mediterranean.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work*: Mezzadria; Retail Selling; Sheep and Wool Economy in the South; *Fashion and Appearance*: Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drink*: Diet and Social Status; Feasting and Fasting; Food Preservation; Foodsellers and Markets; Galenic Health Regimens; Tools for Cooking and Eating; *Housing and Community*: Sewage, Sewerage, and Public Sanitation; Villages and Village Life; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Firearms and Artillery; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Calendars: Sacred and Profane; Carnival; Noble Pursuits; Taverns and Inns; *Religion and Beliefs*: Jews and Judaism

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NUTRITION: A MODERN ASSESSMENT

The modern American is bombarded with messages regarding the relative value and dangers of the food he or she eats. Contemporary science weighs the positives and negatives of calories, vitamins, pesticides, growth hormones, organic growing

conditions, genetic modification, fiber and fat content. Researchers, bureaucrats, and interest groups warn of the dangers of specific additives or of consuming too much or too little of certain nutrients. Some people follow every directive, while many simply ignore it all, chowing down on whatever they like or can afford. Renaissance-era men and women who could afford medical advice heard all about the relative values of their foods as well. Unfortunately the advice was in terms of Aristotelian food qualities and a body's Galenic humors: avoid "cold and wet" foods; consume "hot and dry" ones; eat fruits and fish in moderation; and always keep the humors balanced. But from a modern perspective what were the advantages and dangers of Renaissance-era diets? In this brief overview we will outline caloric intake, balance of basic nutritional elements, vitamin availability and deficiency, and issues regarding food preparation and storage.

The largest single factor in constructing a diet was the availability of various foods. In turn, this depended on other factors: income or wealth—the rich having access to much more and a much greater variety of foods than the poor; region—coastal zones were well provided with protein-rich fish, while folks at high altitudes substituted less nutritious acorn flour for wheat or other grain flour; season—late summer and fall usually saw the harvest of the widest range of fruits, vegetables, and grains, while late winter was starving time; and shortages of certain crops or of food in general due to weather, war, or other extraordinary events.

Daily caloric intake provides a rough measure of a diet's adequacy. Laborers need more and sedentary people need fewer calories to meet their bodies' needs; other factors include age, sex, body size, pregnancy, and local climate. The tables of the wealthy probably provided daily calorie counts as high as 7,000 or 8,000, while the poverty-stricken may have gotten by with as few as 1,000. A study of Tuscany in 1427 concluded that across age groups and occupations the typical diets ran between 2,100 and 2,325 calories per day. Students in Padua around 1600 were provided with about 4,000 daily calories. As we are well aware, however, the sources of those calories are also important. Given Italy's climate and soil conditions, Renaissance-era Italians under normal conditions had access to a variety of animal products, grains, vegetables, and some fruits. One rough estimate of nineteenth-century Italian diets, which were comparable to earlier ones, has 2,600-calories/day divided among animal products (10%) and plant products (90%); or carbohydrates (65%), fats (22%), and protein (13%). Another estimate of the Renaissance period's "Mediterranean diet" divides 2,500–2,900 daily calories as follows: ½ kilogram of bread or cereals (1,250–1,600 cals), 100 grams of black olives (250 cals), 100 grams of cheese (400 cals), some locally available vegetables and wine (250–600 cals). While fruits played an important role in the diets of the wealthy, both custom and medical theory claimed they should be avoided by the physically cruder working classes, even those who grew them.

Clearly the majority of calories in the Italian diet came in the form of carbohydrates from cereals and bread. Detailed analyses of urban diets show daily consumption of these in the range of 700 to 800 kilograms. By comparison, the price for calories derived from meat products was quite high, and thus the accessibility of meat to laboring classes and the poor was low. Around 1600, when compared with prices of cereal products, Florentine prices for the same caloric value of hard cheese, eggs, or mutton were about 7 times as high, for beef 5 times, for lamb 13 times, and for 1,000 calories worth of veal one paid 17 times as much as for 1,000 calories of wheat or beans. Even so, in Palermo in the 1450s Sicilians consumed between 16 and 26 kilograms of meat per head per year and in “Bologna the Fat” in 1593 a whopping 46 kilograms.

Undernutrition, especially in the provision of protein and vitamins, may cause many types of serious problems. Undernourished pregnant women put themselves and their babies at risk; undernourished infants and children may suffer stunted growth and a wide variety of developmental issues; and inadequate protein intake can lead to wasting and edema. Deficiencies in vitamin A (from meat products and beans) may cause vision problems, rickets, and anemia; in vitamin C (citrus and green vegetables) to scurvy and gum disease; and in vitamin B₃ (animal products, whole wheat) can induce pellagra, digestive tract problems, and dementia. Lack of calcium from meat, dairy, or beans affects bone density; lack of iron from animal products and some vegetables can lead to anemia; and in women lack of folate from eggs, vegetables, or whole wheat may cause birth defects. Since most nutrients have more than one effective source, the poor person’s lack of meat or fruits could be balanced by other foods’ contributions, while the avoidance of vegetables by the wealthy was probably made up for with fruits and meat.

The potential for poisoning or disease from poor preparation or storage of food also needs mentioning. Most, though not all, risks were to the digestive tract. Mishandling of chicken or eggs can foster salmonella; undercooked pork may cause trichinosis; rye stored in damp conditions can spawn ergot resulting in ergotism in people; and tainted water may carry many types of more or less dangerous microorganisms. Poorly cleaned vegetables could be affected by human or animal waste; and attempts to preserve fish or meats resulted in the growth of unhealthy bacteria, fungi, or parasites.

See also: *Family and Gender:* Health and Illness; *Food and Drink:* Bread; Diet and Social Status; Drugs; Feasting and Fasting; Food Preservation; Fruits and Vegetables; Galenic Health Regimens; Hunger and Famine; Meats, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy; Wines; *Housing and Community:* Poverty and the Poor; *Science and Technology:* Agriculture and Agronomy; Diseases and Humoral Medicine

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Poultry. *See* Meat, Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy

SALT AND PEPPER, HERBS AND SPICES

Of the four terms in this article's title only salt had anything to do with preserving Renaissance-era foods. It was used to cure, pickle, corn, and salt a variety of fish, meats, and vegetables, and in making cheese. The resulting sardines, brine-soaked pickles and olives, pork and beef products were considered low-class foods, and salty, in general a peasant flavor. Galenic medicine declared salt to be hot and dry, and therefore a corrective to fruit and an aid to digesting cold and moist meats and fish. Along with oil and vinegar salt was a standard ingredient in dressing a mixed salad whether one was pope or pauper. So important to the ancient Roman legions, salt (*sal*) was the basis of their salary. Where missing from the common diet people suffered from goiter and fluid balance diseases. Throughout Renaissance Italy governments controlled and taxed—the *gabelle*—salt and its importation. It was obtained from mines or by evaporating seawater in wide and shallow pans, a business that Venetians took to early on. By the 1350s they controlled the Adriatic sources and trade and actively fought against competitors. By retaining a near-monopoly as late as 1570 they could get an 80% profit on Adriatic sea salt in Italian markets.

Pepper was the oldest and most generously used spice throughout most of the Renaissance era. By definition spices had to be imported—herbs were locally grown—and the ships of the seafaring republics of medieval Amalfi, Pisa, Genoa, and Venice began the flow of the tropical product and its cousins from Constantinople and the Muslim ports of Egypt and the Arab Levant. They, in turn, had received their supplies, via caravans, from sources of origin in Indonesia, India, China, and the East coast of Africa. Spices had long been considered rich in medicinal properties, and this along with their contribution to culinary tastes gave them their very high value and ultimate price in Italian food markets and apothecary

shops. They would never be used to cover the taste of spoiled or rancid foods, as some myths assert. Like salt, most spices were supposed to be hot and dry, and inclusion of them at the table helped balance some people's "cold and moist" humoral natures as well as diets rich in cold and moist foods. Sophisticated cooks (and apothecaries) knew that spices fell along a four-step hotness grading scale (developed by the equally Galenic Arabs), and blended them accordingly: pepper was a four, cloves and cardamom a three, cinnamon, cumin, and nutmeg a two, and so on. Whether as a medicinal simple (single ingredient) or a culinary flavoring, spices were an expensive luxury and limited to the wealthy, or at least well-off, in city and country.

Published cookbooks and menus provide some clues as to how cooks blended and used spices. Fourteenth-century Venetian patricians favored distinctive mixes such as the sweet—one part each bay leaf, cinnamon flowers, and ginger, and one-quarter part cloves—and the strong—one-eighth part cloves to one long pepper and two parts each nutmeg and black pepper. Ships' cargo and market records are scarce but testify to a decline across the fifteenth century in certain very hot spices such as spikenard, cubebs, long pepper, galangal, grains of paradise, and mace, in favor of spices with a sweeter and more aromatic effect, such as ginger, cloves, and cinnamon. In fact, pepper gave way to ginger as a fundamental flavor, only to return in the later sixteenth century.

In general, recipes show that the open-handed use of spices of the early Renaissance era declined in the sixteenth century, from about the 1520s. In Cristoforo Messisbugo's 1549 collection of over 300 Lombard regional recipes from the Ferrara court, 82% used spices, including cinnamon, saffron, pepper, ginger, cloves, nutmeg, mace, and coriander. A bit later, of Giovanni del Turco's recipes, 72% utilized spices, and these were predominantly pepper, cinnamon, cloves, and saffron. The heavy use of spices had always been an ostentatious display of wealth, and as the relative price of spices dropped, their social value may have as well. Some historians also credit a decline in Galenism and its influence on humoral considerations, and others a shift in taste toward the foundational foods and away from flavorings, as among the contemporary French.

Herbs for both medicinal and culinary use were readily available in local wild patches, gardens, and at urban markets and apothecaries. During the Renaissance, and perhaps earlier, cooks and apothecaries found that garden-grown varieties generally had both finer and more consistent qualities than wild ones, and urban window boxes and even peasant plots often gave space to a few of the basics. Leaves, seeds, flowers, and some roots were used for subtle flavors in cooked and raw dishes. Cookbooks regularly mention mint, marjoram, parsley, sage, rosemary, and dill, and less frequently basil, bay, catnip, thyme, and, oddly, oregano. Certain wild flowers served the same purpose: borage, violets, fennel, and elder, among

others. In the early 1600s Ludovico Castelvetro categorized herbs by their savor: for example “sweet” herbs included parsley, Swiss chard, mint, borage, marjoram, basil, and thyme. Garlic shoots and especially the bulb itself, like onions and leeks, were widely considered peasant food, in part because of their strong, acrid flavor and aroma, but also because the edible bulbs grew underground. Professional chefs, however, found that they could “ennoble” the lowborn plants. By pairing them with “noble” meat both were enhanced.

While human taste buds may not have changed much over the past 500 years, the acceptability of certain combinations of flavors has. Modern editors or translators of medieval and Renaissance-era cookbooks routinely warn American cooks against replicating the original program of spices. Indeed, as some contemporary accounts attest, chefs prepared some dishes to be smelled and seen, not eaten, especially at their extravagant banquets.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; Spice Trade; Trade, Seaborne; *Fashion and Appearance*: Scents and Perfumes; *Food and Drink*: Diet and Social Status; Feasting and Fasting; Galenic Health Regimens; Literature of Food and Cooking; *Housing and Community*: Gardens; Villas; *Religion and Beliefs*: Witches and Sorcerers

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Spices. *See* Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices

SUGAR AND CONFECTIONED SWEETS

Until the later Middle Ages Europe’s sweet tooth was to be satisfied solely with honey, certain naturally sweet fruits, and combinations of both. From the fourteenth century that all changed with the stable importation of cane sugar. As cookbooks

demonstrate, sugar became one of the era's most versatile flavorings and artistic media.

Sugarcane had its origins in the Bengal region of India. Ships and caravans brought it to the Muslim ports of the eastern Mediterranean, from which Italian galleys imported it through Venice, Pisa, and Genoa. It was long considered a medicinal spice rather than food, and was a staple ingredient in viscous or liquid compounds known as electuaries and syrups. The Arabs considered sugar to be humorally hot and moist, good for the blood, and excellent at disguising the taste of other less pleasant medicines. Italian apothecaries alone first sold sugar and its medicinal derivatives. By 1350 Arabs were growing cane in Egypt, Syria, and Cyprus (which became Venetian in 1479), and they had begun cultivating it in Sicily. Already in 1379 Venice's wealthiest family, the Corner brothers, had extensive sugar estates in Cyprus that were irrigated by canals and worked by Arab serfs and slaves. By the mid-1400s one plantation alone had 400 laborers. The Corners developed a model vertical enterprise, in which they controlled all of the steps in growing, refining, and marketing sugar. The cane's sweet fluid had to be drained by crushing. The fluid was boiled and poured into conical forms for drying, and was shipped as cone-shaped "loaves." These were then broken into granulated crystals, and if demanded, pulverized into fine whitish powder.

Soon, other Venetian and Genoese companies were cultivating cane on Cyprus, Rhodes, Malta, and Crete. Sugar cultivation utilizing slave labor soon appeared in Madeira (1430s) and the Canary Islands, and from there Spaniards took it to the Caribbean and Portuguese to Brazil in Columbus's wake. The market repaid the higher costs of importing tropical sugar from India and American colonies because it was sweeter. This was due to a growing season that was longer than the Mediterranean's. Up to the 1470s sugar sold at about ten times the price of wheat, which made all of this expansion economical. Inevitably, from roughly 1470 to the 1520s the market price fell by half, even as demand rose. Between the 1520s and 1600, however, exploding demand and the loss of Italian Mediterranean sugar colonies to the Turks drove the price back up some 300%.

By the mid-1400s sugar had emerged as a foodstuff, and by 1500 it had replaced honey as a sweetener in Italian cookbooks. In his cookbook of 1470 papal courtier Platina wrote, "There is no food that rejects sugar." In general, honey descended to become the "sugar" of the poor and peasant. Two-thirds of recorded fifteenth-century southern Italian recipes required sugar, and the trend moved northward. Renaissance-era cooks combined basic tastes such as sweet, sour, hot, and savory in the same dish. Cookbooks for the nobility—the lower classes had none—routinely combined sugar or sweet fruit products with dishes such as vegetable soups or fish, as well as meat and fowl, in sauces and thickened puddings, and

with leafy vegetables. Recipes often paired cinnamon and sugar, making these two of the most common flavors in elite sixteenth-century cooking. The well-dressed table also held a bowl of granulated sugar to cater to individual tastes.

“Confection” at root merely means “something made,” but as *confetti* in Italian, it came to mean “made with sugar.” Certain spices, nuts, and fruits, especially less naturally sweet fruits, were coated in granulated sugar. Sugar was used in preserving fruits as jams, marmalades, and compotes, and in almond paste-based marzipan and many types of nougat. Countless varieties of sweet pastries and cookies resulted from adding sugar to dough, especially when enriched with eggs, nuts, dried fruit bits, and other ingredients. Many of these became regional specialties, often reserved for special seasons such as Christmas or Lent. During a banquet, however, diners had a constant supply of confections, which were only limited by custom (dessert) during the seventeenth century.

In descriptions of banquets from the later fifteenth century the sugary treats that stand out were not the cloying sauces or even clever confections, but the sculptures in sugar that became all but mandatory. Banquet administrators discovered that sugar paste could be molded and dried like clay or gesso, but had the advantage of a sparkling crystalline surface. Literally any three-dimensional shape could be created by molding or sculpting, and these figures could be painted, clothed, or even gilded. The earliest detailed description (1475) is from the Malatesta court of Rimini and mentions a Petrarch-inspired “triumph” or pageant float drawn by sugary horses and elephants and carrying cupids to the Tempio Malatestiana, the dynasty’s church. A banquet in 1529 at Ercole (Hercules) d’Este’s court featured two-foot high painted and gilded figures depicting all Twelve Labors of Hercules. A scene in a sixteenth-century novel by Celio Malaspini reflected an actual banquet at which every bit of the table setting—tablecloth, napkins, plates, silver—was molded sugar, to be consumed when the meal was over. The Medici rulers of Florence employed Mannerist sculptor Giambologna to create the figures for their wedding of 1600, and his assistant Pietro Tacca for that of 1608. The latter featured counterfeits of 40 of Tuscany’s most famous statues (whether life-size or not was not indicated). The Venetians, not to be outdone when it came to sugar, had the architect Sansovino design 300 gilded figures for the celebration of the state visit of French king Henri III in 1574. They were accompanied by 1,200 confections of almond paste and pistachios.

See also: *Family and Gender:* Families, Noble and Patrician; *Fashion and Appearance:* Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drink:* Conduct at Table; Diet and Social Status; Feasting and Fasting; Fruits and Vegetables; Galenic Health Regimens; *Housing and Community:* Palazzi; Villas; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Weddings

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TOOLS FOR COOKING AND EATING

As in other aspects of life, the tools available to a cook depended on his or her wealth, status, and occupation. Though a discussion of this sort carves out large categories of urban and rural or rich and poor, it is important to note that households and families lived along a scale of material wealth. Though well-off Renaissance-era Italians had many implements for preparing and cooking foods of all kinds, the majority at the poorer end made do with a few necessities. It was the same at table, though among the upper classes changes over time in customs and tableware influenced one another, eventually creating new demands for dishes and utensils. Despite such changes these things were passed along in wills, whose household inventories provide excellent sources regarding what people had and how many of each. Of course, those who sold their prepared foods used whatever tools were necessary and available.

In the countryside, even the poorest households were counted for tax purposes as *fuochi*, fires or hearths. A pot or covered kettle made of iron or another metal hung suspended over the fire by a hook. This served many cooking purposes, though even the embers themselves were used as a kind of crude oven. A second piece of cookware might be a flat griddle, skillet, or saucepan held by its long handle over the fire. A family with access to meat would have a metal spit braced by two supports on either side of the fire. One or two knives for skinning, cutting, slicing, and chopping would be highly prized, kept sharp by itinerant grinders or the local blacksmith. A few bowls or basins and simple versions of strainers, colanders, graters, and a mortar and pestle would further serve in preparing foods. The mortar was the Renaissance-era food processor, used for grinding or mashing all manner of ingredients. Food was served with a large fork and spoon or ladle into communal dishes—flat platters and bowls—made of wood or inexpensive terra-cotta. Most foods were consumed directly from the serving dishes, though a slice of older bread

could serve as a trencher onto which portions were served. A pitcher and one or two communal drinking vessels made of wood, tin, or baked clay served the family and guests alike. Food storage was a matter of wicker baskets or bins, wooden boxes or casks, covered pottery jars, and skin bags for fluids such as vinegar or olive oil. The aim was much less to keep foods fresh than to keep pests out.

As families rose in wealth their cooking space became more specialized (the kitchen), the wall-inset fireplace replaced the firepit, and the spit was fancier and used more frequently. They could afford a greater variety of pots and pans, some made of copper, and more useful tools such as a whisk and tongs. Their mortar and pestle might have been of brass instead of wood or soapstone, and their knives and bowls more numerous and varied. Customs changed across Italy at varying rates, faster in northern cities and more slowly in the south, but by the later fifteenth century or so an acceptable table had individual place settings of a plate (tin, pewter, or ceramic), drinking vessel (increasingly of mass-produced Altara glass from Liguria), spoon, and iron knife (often with the tip rounded to discourage jabbing food or people). The plate and knife at each place meant diners could now cut up portions of meat at the table. A pointed knifepoint could skewer the morsel; if not, fingers had to do until forks became popular. These have a unique history. Long acceptable as carving and serving utensils, as aids to eating they first appeared in Italy among the Byzantines and became associated with the Greeks and their religious schism with the Catholic Church. For some it was even sinful to eat with one: composer Claudio Monteverdi is said to have paid for three Masses to be said after each occasion he used a schismatic fork in company. Even so, Renaissance-era Italians took to them, especially for pasta, so that a sixteenth-century French traveler remarked that unlike the Germans and French, upper-class Italians insisted on individual forks at table.

In the grand household, food presentation to visitors was a matter of honor or even tool of state and not just a matter of hospitality. Cooking and serving at this level was not the wife or servant's job, but the professional responsibility of a crew of male specialists. Papal chef Bartolomeo Scappi spent a good deal of his cookbook and many of its illustrations on the layout and organization of the papal kitchen and the long list of the finest implements and cooking vessels a pope could buy. Cauldrons over fires still contained the menus' soups and stews, but multiple cooking surfaces and ovens added to the kitchen's potential output. Tastes and sheer number of mouths made new demands for extended surfaces and more specialized tools for preparing pastries, containers for storing ingredients—including expensive spices—and both prep and cooking spaces for dishes as large as a horse. As for the dining room (or rooms) ostentation was not for banquets alone. Murano glassware, polished silver platters, and ceramic tureens from China gleamed from sideboards, and guests used the most up-to-date dinnerware and utensils anywhere

in Europe. Not to be outdone by princes or cardinals, Roman banker Agostino Chigi famously served a banquet on silver dishes, which he had his guests toss into the Tiber River at meal's end. Unseen but well-placed nets caught the treasure, which he no doubt used another day. Or so the story goes.

See also: *Arts*: Ceramics, Decorative; Daily Life in Art; Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; *Economics and Work*: Retail Selling; *Family and Gender*: Heraldry; *Food and Drink*: Conduct at Table; Feasting and Fasting; Literature of Food and Cooking; *Housing and Community*: Furnishing the House; Palazzi; Villages and Village Life; Villas; *Science and Technology*: Glassmaking

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Vegetables. *See* **Fruits and Vegetables**

WINES

Along with bread and perhaps olive oil, wine (*vino*) was and is the quintessential Mediterranean staple. It was as fundamental to the Eucharist at a papal Mass as it was to an Italian peasant's table.

Grape vines grew nearly everywhere on the peninsula, and even peasants could squeeze them into nooks and crannies. Making wine from the grapes was as basic as crushing the fruit, allowing the juice—and possibly the skins and some of the pulp—to ferment under more or less controlled conditions, and straining the resulting fluid when finished. The fermenting was a form of preservation of the grape harvest, as was drying grapes into raisins. The wine was stored in barrels large and small until being decanted into pitchers (*boccali*) and drunk, or it turned to vinegar with age and was used in cooking and on salads. Wine that was beginning to turn

might have its unpleasant musty or acrid flavor covered with added spices such as cloves, nutmeg, or cinnamon, or honey or sugar. Wine was bulky and generally did not travel well, and the vast majority of Italian wine was consumed locally, the best being sold to the nearest market or retained by the landlord. The best of the best, however, might be shipped to distant customers (dukes, popes, doges, Neapolitan viceroys), or as gifts or bribes. Certain northern regions, such as Friuli, Istria, Brescia, and Vicenza routinely exported their finer vintages to Germany, and the best Neapolitan wines were often found in Spain. Conversely, Italians imported Spanish and Aegean reds, and whites from the Rhineland.

Renaissance-era Italian writers recognized five principal qualities of unaltered wine: red or white (a matter of including the skin during fermentation); sweet or dry (depending on how much of the natural sugar was turned to alcohol); and smoothness, or what a modern connoisseur would call finish. The same batch of grapes might produce a red or white, sweet or dry wine, depending on how the crushed fruit was handled. But the same variety of grape treated the same way was subject to other factors as well, including the nature of the soil, elevation, and the weather conditions during the growing season. Soils might be sandy or heavy with clay, terraced on hillsides or flat, high in mountains or near sea level, rich with nutrients or lacking these, acidic or alkali, and so on. The growing season might be cold and wet or hot and dry. Also, the vines themselves might be young, mature, or quite old. All of these factors affected the flavors of the grapes and the resulting varieties and vintages of wines. The age of a batch of wine (younger was better), whether it had been watered down, and its level of alcohol also affected quality and value. The fourteenth-century Spanish *Book of Wines*, which went through 21 editions in several languages, listed 49 varieties of medicinal wines. During the same century a Bolognese specialist catalogued over 20 varieties of local Italian wines. In the 1550s the popes' "bottle master" classified and discussed 55 Italian varieties in the papal cellars, evaluating them on color, texture, taste, and aroma. He ranked the Tuscan red Montepulciano highest. In general, white wines tended to be associated with the upper classes, while reds satisfied the rest. In Genoa, an official inspected all incoming wines at the gate and segregated them into the best, which were reserved for the patricians' choice, and the rest, which went to market.

Cookbooks routinely suggest cooking with wine, especially to help soften tough meats in stews, but also as a flavoring in sauces and even pastries. Physicians argued about wine's humoral qualities, but all agreed it had two sides. It was excellent for dissolving and flavoring medicines and itself had medicinal properties: for example, sweet wines best treated melancholics. It also, however, led to diseases such as dropsy, gout, and vertigo, and behavioral problems such as laziness, dishonesty, and anger when consumed regularly in large quantities. Drunkenness,

especially in public, was associated with members of the higher classes, as was drinking as entertainment, and both laws and Christian culture fought against it. Nonetheless, perhaps inspired by Platonic academies, in the sixteenth century elite drinking clubs such as Milan's Accademia della Valle di Bregno or Rome's Accademia dei Vignaiuoli (vine-dressers) emerged, at which the boozy poetry of Naples's Giovanni Pontano and the Venetian Jacopo Sannazaro was celebrated. Poet Giovanni Battista Scarlino wrote of sixteenth-century Rome's many offerings, borrowing Dante's terza rima and even suggesting some appropriate food pairings. It seems that wealthy Romans especially favored Cretan Malvolgia, sweet Moscatello, Trebbiano, and Neapolitan Greco.

Aperitifs and Cordials

Altering wines for medicinal or digestive purposes originated with monastic cellarers and apothecaries. This usually meant reducing the amount of water and thereby raising the alcohol level per unit. Distilling wine and capturing the alcohol, as was done in northern Europe with brandy ("burnt wine"), produced the strong Italian aquavit (water of life), considered both medicine and beverage. Other typical Italian products were ros solis (sun dew), vin santo (holy wine), grappa, and defrutum, which was wine cooked down to half its volume, resulting in a heavy, dark, strong "fortified" wine. Usually these were—and are—drunk before meals to aid digestion.

At table everyone consumed wine, children included. At Florence's Santa Maria Nuova Hospital in the fourteenth century 20% of the food budget went to wine. Studies have shown consumption levels of ½ to 2 liters per day, or annual average levels of 260–270 liters per adult in Renaissance Italy's major cities. Rome imported 7,000,000 liters annually in the sixteenth century through its port alone, while millions more arrived by cart. Hundreds of Roman wine shops and bars served locals and visitors by the cup, glass, or pitcher, as did inns and taverns that also sold food. In every Italian town household wine was bought by the cask or barrel; bottling was yet to come. Wine tended to be diluted at the table or drunk with water or ice, and even good wines were often flavored with all sorts of things, from fruits (like Spanish sangria) to honey, spices, sandalwood, and licorice. It might be chilled in a stream, or heated with a red-hot iron poker from the fire. While other beverages such as beer and fruit-based cider and perry were available, especially in rural areas, wine was always the default drink, for both daily consumption and on special occasions.

See also: Arts: Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work:* Mezzadria; *Food and Drink:* Conduct at Table; Food Preservation; Fruits and Vegetables; Galenic Health Regimens; Literature of Food and Cooking; *Housing and Community:* Villa; Villages and Village Life; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Drunkenness; Weddings; *Religion and Beliefs:* Sacraments, Catholic; *Science and Technology:* Agriculture and Agronomy; Alchemy; Glassmaking; *Primary Document:* Wine and Patronage: Giovanni Boccaccio. “Cisti’s Wine.” *Decameron* (1349)

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HOUSING AND COMMUNITY



INTRODUCTION

Community meant many things in Renaissance-era Italy. It could consist of the folks in a village, one's fellow Franciscans or cloistered nuns, worshippers at the parish church, brothers in its confraternity; members of the same guild, fellow Hungarians; neighbors in the same quarter, or political allies. Community had a spatial element, too: the rural village, monastery, parish, neighborhood, ethnic enclave, or the area bounded by the city's walls. Few, perhaps only nuns, belonged to but one community; most belonged to several. These were sources of identity, honor, income, security, and safety and good health. Second only to one's family, communities defined and shaped the individual.

Just as modern America presents a full spectrum of residential arrangements from obscenely lavish mansions to cardboard boxes under overpasses, so too Italians inhabited a wide range of quarters, from grand villas and palazzi to a bed in a charity hospital. The Renaissance era was a time of complicated and often conflicting social norms. On the one hand, humanist and even chivalric influences emphasized magnificence in lifestyle. This spread beyond oneself to benefit the honor and reputation of the community at large. Cosimo de' Medici the Elder could hardly deny his rival the right to construct a palazzo grander than his own since imposing structures added to the city's greatness. On the other hand, Christian charity insisted that God's less fortunate be cared for by the Christian community, and so founding homes, orphanages, hospitals, and charitable residences of all types were founded and run with the gifts of the same wealthy whose palazzi graced the city. Italian communities were dedicated to both secular magnificence and to the fruits of spiritually induced charity. Honor was bound up with how one spent money and how one gave it away.



In his *View of an Ideal City* (1477), Sienese architect, engineer, and painter Francesco di Giorgio Martini (1439–1501) imagines a Platonically perfect cityscape. It is clean and clear, spatially marked by the perspectival grid ground pattern, and seamlessly joining the docks beyond. Tempera on panel. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

For the people in the middle, a residence could mean a nasty room in a boarding house, a set of rooms attached to one's workshop, a sturdy house in the countryside, or a suite in one's family's palazzo. As much as clothing did, residences reflected social status, and a personal history of residences spoke to one's desire to succeed in the eyes of society. If the elite were born at society's apex and the destitute had few exit strategies from poverty, the middling class of artisans, young professionals, skilled laborers, well-off peasants, and second and third sons could often rise within the status group to achieve comfortable lodging, reasonable incomes, moderate wealth, and honor in their peers' eyes.

Community also meant preservation of health. Community and Church organizations provided food, shelter, and medical care to the living, and burial of the dead. Cities provided community physicians who treated all comers at no cost. During epidemics cities hired physicians and surgeons to treat victims. Colleges (professional organizations) of physicians came to oversee medical practitioners of all kinds and advised rulers and civic authorities on medical matters. Dukes and city councils appointed health commissions during plague time to advise them of needed measures and laws. Eventually these took on lives of their own, controlling health legislation and policing across Italy. Sixteenth-century cities and their sub-communities built more hospitals, regulated more health care providers, and provided more food than ever before. It was also the century that saw the poor gathered up and Jews locked away in ghettos. Maintaining public health came to mean many things, and became a community's responsibility. Perhaps this should read: "the state's responsibility."

The study of housing and communities in Italy during the Italian Renaissance era involves an extremely broad range of sources, at least for the larger cities. Many of the major public buildings are still standing, as are palaces and villas from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Even a few later fourteenth-century private palazzi remain in something like their original condition, such as the Palazzo Davanzati in Florence or Prato's Palazzo Datini. Tuscan and Umbrian hill towns retain many of their Renaissance-era features, so that a visit or even a set of photographs can place one in the urban environment of 500 years ago. Contemporary images, too, play their part in explaining how furnished rooms, a *piazza* filled with revelers, or the gardens of a villa looked at the time. The age of technical drawing was just beginning, so house plans and maps on various scales provide details and overviews that one may trust for accuracy. Travel guides and city prints introduce us to Venice's six *sestieri* (quarters), 72 *contrade* (neighborhoods), 44 monasteries, and 450 public and private bridges. Printed books on architecture show and discuss what was and what some dreamed there would be. Documentary evidence abounds, from probate inventories that list and sometimes value every possession that filled a house or shop to personal diaries and memoirs that add the dynamism of change over time. Laws of all sorts helped shape the built and social environments, from banning architectural overhangs to relocating smelly tanneries. Personal letters and other descriptions gush over villa gardens and public spectacles, while quantitative records, still in their infancy, provide data on an increasingly wide range of demographic matters from plague deaths to communal livestock. An audit made in 1542 by investigators for Cosimo I de' Medici would introduce historians to some 300 Tuscan charitable establishments run by monks, nuns, friars, confraternities, cities, village councils, parishes, and the inmates themselves. Literary works such as poetry, novelle, and prescriptive works also shed light on community life and its environment. The student of the Renaissance era's communities truly has an embarrassment of riches.

BARBERS AND SURGEONS

Barbers groomed and cared for the surface of human bodies. Surgeons and barber-surgeons treated the body for any needs not met by changes in diet, lifestyle, or the prescription of medicines, which were reserved to physicians. What training they received was empirical, under direction of a practitioner, himself—sometimes herself—supervised by the city's barber and surgeon's guild and often health board. Because Italian medical schools eventually included courses in surgery, some surgeons had this education as well.

Given the nature of their business, barbers and surgeons required well-maintained toolkits and shops, though many also made house calls. A large city had dozens of shops scattered about, and in 1446 moderate-sized Treviso's guild enrolled at least 39 barbers. The toolkit included towels, razors, basins, lancets for opening veins, a scalpel for opening abscesses, forceps for removing teeth, scissors and combs for grooming hair, a burner with charcoal, tweezers for grasping nits, lice, ticks, and other parasites, and a variety of soaps, astringents, ointments, and oils for healthy and diseased skin.

During the sixteenth century, many cities' surgeons sought status closer to that of university-educated physicians than groomers. Some obtained their own guilds, often accompanied by greater official scrutiny and oversight. Roman barber-surgeon Paolo Magni wrote that the practitioner should appear professional, clean, and appropriately dressed; should be discrete, modest, and well spoken; and should avoid strong odors since he worked so closely with others.

While wealthy men had servants who were trusted to shave and groom them, others relied on barbers. They cut hair, trimmed beards and moustaches, and shaved faces; washed hair and beards when in style; checked for and removed scalp and ear parasites; and might have treated scalp or facial skin problems. Because they were skilled with razors, they were also entrusted with performing medicinal bleedings or bloodlettings. Removing supposedly excess blood was a form of internal cleansing, often performed routinely twice a year. A vein in the arm was opened using a small lancet, and blood was allowed to flow into a basin. This procedure required skill, since there were at least four regional styles of cutting, and where one cut and how much one drained depended on such factors as the phase of the moon or dominant astrological house. Other techniques included using leeches to suck out blood, cupping—using heated cups whose suction drew blood to the surface—or scarification. Bloodletting was also a treatment for certain conditions, such as fevers and pus-producing infections.

Because such procedures took time, a customer might spend an hour or more in a barber's shop. Others came in to await service, and still others remained until they could walk straight again. Barber shop conversations were verbal free-for-alls in what one wag called "the shop of truth": hence Magni's insistence on discretion. Neighborhood gossip, political opinions, religious notions, news from abroad, business rumors, personal secrets: all flowed like the blood from a lanced vein. To pass time, sixteenth-century shops in major cities carried *avvisi* (newsletters) and other news sheets. Some hated to see their shop space wasted each evening and hosted gambling or rented space to prostitutes. Many also sold early patent medicines marketed to the home healer. Surgeon Leonardo Fioravanti created several such brands, including Wound Powder, Grand Liqueur, Mighty Elixir, and Blessed Oil.

Gossip, News, and Spies

It is cliché that the barber shop or hairdresser's is a fount of local information. This was true in Renaissance-era cities as well. Men exchanged news, rumors, lies, boasts, and secrets while having faces shaved, hair cut, or beards trimmed. Venetian authorities understood and found that foreign spies frequented these establishments to gain intelligence and gauge local opinion. In turn, officials planted their own informants among customers to root out the overly curious as well as the too talkative. State secrets, economic news, the identification of heretics, or word of crimes past or under consideration were too important to let slip away.

The well-dressed physician remained well dressed because he could afford clean clothes and because his only threats came from street mud and the occasional spewed vomit when a purgative worked especially well. Whether shipboard, on a battlefield, in a plague hospital, bedside, or at his shop, the surgeon's iconic stained apron spoke volumes of the healer whose job was to get dirty with the misfortunes of humanity. Beside bleedings, surgeons regularly treated injuries that broke bones or teeth and seriously damaged the skin. Life, whether rural or urban, was dangerous. Children suffered abuse and accidents, farmers were injured by animals and got hernias from exertions. Violence resulted in wounds of all types, as did the brutal sports in which men participated. Lack of hygiene led to all manner of skin conditions, and punctures could easily lead to tetanus. Bleeding had to be stopped, wounds cleansed, and torn flesh sewn together. Bandages protected healing wounds but needed changing, and plasters and clysters needed application. When a pregnant woman's delivery became complicated, the midwife called for a physician, but the physician summoned the surgeon whose hands and tools rotated the baby or removed the deceased infant's remains. During plague outbreaks surgeons tended victims as readily as physicians.

Surgeons accompanied armies, ready to set broken bones, sew up sword slashes, salve burns, and cauterize and bandage gunshot wounds. Ships' crews included surgeons who tended the diseased, undernourished, and dehydrated, as well as accident victims and those wounded in sea battles. Some surgeons competed with skilled itinerant empirics who treated hernias, removed kidney stones, and cleaned and pulled teeth. Still others developed techniques in rhinoplasty and other forms of plastic surgery, a valuable skill in the age of the deformations of syphilis. Surgeons also supervised certain types of torture that were meant to cause pain but not kill.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Apprentices; Guilds; *Family and Gender:* Birth and Midwives; Health and Illness; *Fashion and Appearance:* Bathing and Personal Hygiene; Facial Hair; Hair and Hairstyles; Mouth and Teeth; *Housing and Community:* Health Commissions and Boards; Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Physicians; Plague; Prisons; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Politics and Warfare:* Armies; Soldiers; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Executions; *Science and Technology:* Anatomy and Dissection; Medical Education; Surgery

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CITY STREETS AND PIAZZE

Streets were the circulatory systems of Renaissance-era cities. They were straight or meandering; paved with brick or ribbons of foul mud; narrow, dark, and built over with rickety extensions of flanking houses or recently broadened to accommodate processions and the crowds they drew. They were drains, dumps, and sewers. Streets carried the people, goods, news, ceremonies, battalions, plague rats, and all the rest that made up life in urban Renaissance-era Italy. But a street has height as well as length and breadth. The houses, shops, palazzo façades, church fronts, and long blank walls of religious or charitable institutions served as a screen that hemmed in the pedestrian and that was punctuated by the byways and alleys intersecting his route. The screen presented much to behold: half-open doors, iron rings to which horses were hitched, shops and shop signs, tabernacles with sculpted or painted images of patron or plague saints, and carved and painted heraldic arms identifying a noble family’s residence, church, or object of charity. A palazzo might feature stone benches, a loggia, a public water spigot, and a fine view of its atrium. Noises, voices, and smells wafted down streets, from the pleasant to the distasteful and disgusting.



Woodcut of "Pisa" is from the 1493 edition of the *Nuremberg Chronicle* illustrated by the workshop of Michael Wohlgemut. It typifies the naïve and utterly inaccurate nature of early city portraits. In such a work the same image might be used several times and given several labels. (Historical Picture Archive/Corbis/Getty Image)

Members of a Mediterranean society, Renaissance-era Italians lived much of their lives outdoors, the adjoining street serving as an extension of the house. Weather permitting, meals were eaten there, gossip was exchanged, arguments were staged, deals were made, wine was consumed, and wagers were won and lost. Upper-class women tended to avoid the streets, however, which were left to working-class women, servant girls on errands, widows, women shopping, visiting, or going to church, beggars, and prostitutes. In general, open spaces seem to have been male spaces.

The Italian *piazza* (French *place*, Spanish *plaza*) is a destination that a pedestrian may treat as a large street. It may be little more than a broad place in the street on which fronts a large townhouse or small church. Or it may be an enormous ceremonial area dedicated to Church functions, as the Piazza of St. Peter's in Rome, or to state functions as the Piazza San Marco in Venice or the Piazza Signoria

in Florence. The cramped and twisting streets and byways of late medieval Italy needed open areas suited to neighborhood gatherings; where dancers could move freely and musicians perform; where the sun shone on the pavement—when there was pavement—or dried the mud; where old women selling daily necessities and edibles from small kiosks or carts could find a niche yet still be found. Early Christian churches often featured walled forecourts in which processions gathered, preachers preached, and the weary found a bench and some shade. Some still exist, as at San Giovanni in Ravenna or San Clemente in Rome. Usually, though, these spaces were eventually opened up to the street, on which the church now opened directly. The space was no longer an appendage of the church, but a feature of the neighborhood. Larger *piazze* were ancient Roman footprints of forums or arenas. Meeting places of several streets created natural open spaces, and some developed around water sources. City halls invariably opened into gathering places in which crowds would gather for news, edicts, calls to arms, demonstrations of discontent, executions, or political rallies. Piazza San Marco was Venice's singular large gathering space for all state and religious ceremonial purposes. The Venetian equivalent of local *piazze* were *campi*, or fields, which were originally just that: large garden plots where animals grazed, wells were sunk, and garbage dumped. Cities had space dedicated for markets, but these were often not designated *piazze*, though many large *piazze* featured regular or holiday markets. Part of the distinction was jurisdictional. Who could tax the trade taking place and who regulated the sellers: bishop, market authorities, or civic government?

In major Italian cities, rulers and communal governments applied the Renaissance-era ideal of magnificence to city streets and *piazze*. Civic building projects included street widening and expansion of open spaces. Paving began in 1298 with Siena's brick dressing of major streets and the Piazza Pubblico and continued throughout Italy across the period. Public health required some level of sanitation, and civic governments complied. Magistrates of the Streets or similar officials monitored and regulated construction, paving, and street cleaning. In 1432 the administrators of Florence's Cathedral bought 92 brooms to sweep its *piazza*. Church and palazzo construction sometimes opened opportunities to unify street fronts and provide minor amenities such as loggias or benches. Nevertheless, even wealthy Florence failed to apply finished façades to several of its major churches, including Santa Croce, San Lorenzo, and the Cathedral.

Streets and *piazze* were stages across which Renaissance-era Italian society and its guests conducted themselves daily. Locals recognized each other, stopping to chat or argue; strangers often gave away their identity by their clothes. There were priests, monks, friars, and nuns in a dozen distinctive habits; Jews marked by distinctive yellow badges; nobles in high fashion on horseback; prostitutes with bells, kerchiefs, or other telling accessories; physicians in their gowns and berets;

and pilgrims with their cloaks or wide-brimmed hats pinned with cheap tin souvenirs. Funeral processions met wedding groups; and shoeless beggars approached the wealthy in litters. Criminals as well as street entertainers plied their trades, while dogs, cats, rats, horses, mules, goats, and pigs often roamed at will. Laws against loitering, fighting, robbery, gambling, ball-playing, erecting structures, or blocking streets were fruitless, if well-meaning, attempts to regulate a city's very life force.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Retail Selling; *Housing and Community*: Neighborhood and Parish; Palazzi; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; Sewage, Sewerage, and Public Sanitation; Transportation, Local; *Politics and Warfare*: City Halls; Crime and Punishments; Urban Public Safety; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; Music and Dance in Popular Culture; News; Songs and Singing, Popular; Sports, Contests, and Competitions; Street Entertainment; Theater, Popular; *Religion and Beliefs*: Churches; Preachers and Preaching; *Primary Document*: Florence's Old Market in the Later Fourteenth Century: Antonio Pucci. "The Character of the Mercato Vecchio in Florence" (c. 1380s)

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DEATH IN THE COMMUNITY

Dealing with the dead was usually a community event. Some were swept up in shipwrecks, Alpine avalanches, or battles far from home. But for those who died in or near their communities, society marked the event with ritual. Society might mean one's fellow monks or nuns, one's friends and neighbors, or an entire state

that mourned the loss of its leader. Rituals reassured the living, but they also reinforced the civil or village fabric. Some rituals, such as prayers and Masses, were believed to have spiritual power to help the deceased's soul avoid time in purgatory. These reinforced the Church's position and its role in shaping and maintaining its control of culture.

Some deaths were more important than others. The passing of a duke, pope, or wealthy patrician warranted society-wide recognition and action; that of a laborer or peasant woman, while devastating to friends and family, made few ripples beyond the sound of the parish church bell. Yet in an honor-conscious world such as Renaissance-era Italy, the poor and the powerful alike deserved society's recognition and prayers.

Burial typically took place within three days of death. During epidemics, corpses were quickly and often unceremoniously disposed of, though they might putrefy for days before being discovered. Some bodies were crudely embalmed if they had to be transported or lie in state for public viewing and prayers. Though customs differed, the urban guildsman could expect to have his corpse quickly washed and oiled by the women of his family or confraternity brothers. He might be clad in a shroud or a religious order's garb, even if a layman. He was more likely to be dressed in his best, however. His body prepared and laid out, the deceased's house was opened to those who would pay respects and pray for his soul. Female friends and relatives loudly mourned, while clergy or confraternity brothers ritually prayed the Seven Penitential Psalms over and over.

Meanwhile, the church of his choice was prepared for a Mass for the Dead, or Requiem. News of the death spread among those likely to mourn, including neighbors, fellow guildsmen, confraternity brothers, relatives, local officials, and male clergy and religious. Professional mourners might also be hired for the procession. As well, food and drink were gathered for the meal after the Mass and burial. Mourning clothing was quickly purchased, rented, borrowed, or aired out for family members.

When all was ready, the church bell tolled and the procession from home to church gathered. Customs varied across Italy, but a common model seems to have put the clergy and officials at the head of the line, the corpse and any personal, guild, church, or other symbols in the middle, and the family followed by other mourners at the end. This procession is often referred to as the funeral. The more socially significant the deceased, the longer was this cortege. When the mother of a well-off Florentine weaver died in 1521, her corpse was preceded by almost 100 Franciscans, 40 confraternity members, on whose bier she lay, and 9 priests. For high-status figures, community members preceding the corpse could be in the thousands. Signs of what the deceased meant to the community were carried directly around the corpse. Venice liked to honor dead physicians with large medical books,

lawyers with the Civil Law Code, and humanist authors with copies of their own works. Prominent families would display their coats of arms on banners, shields, and the drapery on which the corpse lay. Civil officials might have the flags of towns they had served or other civic symbols around them. If the parade preceding the body declared that the person was important, this element explained why.

Mourners, beginning with immediate family, followed the bier. Women, whose function in these rituals was to express their sorrow outwardly, were often banned from the group of processing mourners, whatever their relation. The trail of mourners also reflected the deceased's social status, and could range from a few to hundreds of participants. While a commoner's cortege was likely to move directly from house to church, Church or political leaders' processions could cover miles. For these, routes were often symbolic of places in and outside of town related to the individual or family, or to the person's Church or civic office. The 1516 funeral procession of Giuliano de' Medici, ruler of Florence and brother of Pope Leo X, lasted five hours and included 15 horses. His body was dressed in gold brocade and armor, accompanied by a sword and spurs, and topped by a cap that looked like a papal triple tiara. At the church of San Lorenzo it was placed atop a structure 63 feet tall for display.

The Mass for the Dead, or Requiem, was attended by all. This differed regionally until standardized in 1570, and could be simple or very elaborate, with or without music, text sung or merely spoken. For the truly elite, candles filled the church, creating what the French called a "burning chapel." One hopes this was not indicative of where the soul of the deceased had ended up.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Guilds; *Family and Gender:* Death, Funerals, and Burial; *Fashion and Appearance:* Religious Habits and Vestments; Social Status and Clothing; *Food and Drink:* Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community:* Foreign Communities; Jewish Communities; Plague; Villages and Village Life; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Civic Festivals; News; *Religion and Beliefs:* Confraternities; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory

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FOREIGN COMMUNITIES

Renaissance-era Italy's cities hosted communities from throughout Europe and the Mediterranean basin. People came as refugees, students, diplomats, churchmen, merchants, skilled émigré craftsmen, scholars, physicians, and musicians. As newcomers do, they formed quick ties with those from their homelands, whether few or many. Some communities were very fluid, with people coming and going, never really settling down. Others were of long-standing. Some fellow countrymen did not get along, such as Catholic and Protestant Germans or Frenchmen. Creating community was important for several reasons. As a group, residents could present a united front against unreasonable authorities, or to gain certain objectives, such as a church designated to the group or acceptance into guilds. They could easily disseminate among themselves news from abroad, celebrate native festivities not shared by Italians, protect one another if religious or political animosity was stirred up against them, and integrate newcomers quickly. They might reside closely together, as the English in Rome or ghettoized Jews, or they may have been scattered through a city's neighborhoods like Venice's Turks.

Naples and Sicilian cities such as Palermo and Syracuse had large populations of Spanish and Portuguese, as well as Muslims and Jews. Muslims formed nervous communities only in mainland port cities such as Naples, Livorno, Genoa, Bari, Taranto, and of course Venice. These consisted predominantly of merchants, and probably had a high turnover rate. Economic competition and continuous harassment of Italian ports by Barbary and other Muslim pirates made these communities especially fragile.

Venice had the most diverse set of foreign communities. In the thirteenth century, resident Armenians, Germans, Turks, and Italians from Lucca each formed a sort of consortium called an *albergaria* (*alberghiero* = hotel), around which they formed communities. During the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, five nationalities came to be housed in large residential and commercial compounds modeled on the Arab version or *funduk*. Germans, Persians, Greeks, Arabs, and Turks each had a *fondaco*. The state owned the properties and rented them to the communities. For convenience they were located in commercially accessible spots, unlike the Jewish Ghetto. The Persians and Turks sat along the Grand Canal and the Germans

very near the Rialto. Built in two or three stories around a courtyard, the *fondaco* kept goods and short-time residents on the ground floor, while maintaining permanent residents and offices upstairs. From the 1560s to the 1580s about 700 German Protestants lived in Venice. About 200 lived by their own lights in their *fondaco*, and 500 scattered about, at least appearing to conform to Catholic religious practice.

Greeks in Venice constituted one of the largest foreign communities in Italy. A common pattern was for the national group to petition for a confraternity, or lay religious brotherhood. This was followed by requests for its own church, and around this grew an ethnic neighborhood or district. In 1500, the Greek population in Venice was perhaps 5,000 strong, growing to around 14,000 by 1606, some 10% of the population. Since Venice controlled many Greek territories, some Greeks migrated from colonies to the metropolis. Others fled Turkish advances, from the Fall of Constantinople (1453) to the aftermath of the Battle of Lepanto (1571). They congregated in the Castello district and worshipped from the 1440s in the church of San Biagio, and from a century later in San Giorgio dei Greci. Venice hosted the only Greek Orthodox bishop in Renaissance-era Italy. Greek merchants had a *fondaco*; Greek shipbuilders lived in a small ghetto near the Arsenale; and others were scholars, teachers, printers, and publishers. Greeks had their own hospital, library (from 1597), monastery (from 1599), and the Collegio dei Flangini, a preparatory academy for the University of Padua.

Confraternities created a proto-congregation of foreign-speaking folk with their own language and Christian traditions. Venice hosted confraternities for Nurembergers, Germans generally, Greeks, Albanians, Florentines, and Milanese. One form this took was the Confraternity of the Rosary, founded in Germany in 1474. Transplanted Regensburger Leonhard Wild founded Venice's branch among its Germans in 1504. In Genoa, the Consortium of Foreigners of the Madonna of Mercy from the fourteenth century had a combined membership of Lombards, Romans, Germans, and Frenchmen. They worshipped at Mass on Sundays and Church feasts at the mendicant Servite church of Santa Maria. Members aided sick or impoverished brothers and sisters, ran hostels for the sick, and aided in member funeral services. Unlike other Italian confraternities, there were no officers, low membership fees, and women were welcome to participate. Perugia's foreign confraternity organized non-Umbrian university students, and Treviso's Germans had their own brotherhood based at the church of San Francesco.

Rome hosted 9 foreign confraternities in 1500 and had 12 more a century later. As elsewhere, foreign meant non-Roman, not non-Italian, so Venetians and Florentines also counted. Rome drew foreigners for many reasons. Some came as pilgrims and stayed; others came on Church, commercial, or diplomatic business. Perhaps 75% of Rome's total population in the sixteenth century consisted of Florentines, Lombards, English, Germans, French, and Iberians. The Florentines

Turks in Venice

Ottoman subjects lived in Venice as merchants, spies, and diplomats. Their residences were originally scattered across the city, but sixteenth-century officials sought to locate all or most in one place. Since Venice and the Ottoman Empire often fought, a secure site protected Turks from mob violence, and if attacked Venice could seal the foreigners in. One site was considered in 1579, another in 1589. In 1604 a palazzo on the Grand Canal was finally chosen and adapted for the Muslims. Men were kept from women, Albanians from Turks, and a Christian porter guarded the single public entrance.

centered in the Ponte district, not far from the Vatican, were the strongest community, with their church of San Giovanni Decollato. Spanish national churches included San Pietro in Montorio, San Giacomo degli Spagnoli, and Santa Maria in Monserrato; and the French frequented San Luigi dei Francesi. Beside regular worship, these groups sponsored hospices for national pilgrims and celebrated grandly in their churches when their national monarchs died.

See also: *Arts:* Art Patronage; Non-Europeans in Art; *Economics and Work:* Book Printing and Sales; Slaves and Slavery; *Fashion and Appearance:* Social Status and Clothing; *Food and Drink:* Foreign Foods; *Housing and Community:* Jewish Communities; *Politics and Warfare:* Citizenship; *Religion and Beliefs:* Churches; Confraternities; Protestantism

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Foundling Homes. See Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes

FURNISHING THE HOUSE

Residences differed wildly in size and complexity among Italy's many regions, cities, and classes. Some were rented, others owned; the villas and palazzi of the wealthy contrasted with urban laborers' tiny sets of rooms or peasants' hovels. Even among country folk, living quarters could vary widely, increasing in size and quality with growing prosperity of regions and families. Poverty or limited income certainly restricted the amount of stuff a family could accumulate, even as the Renaissance era provided a fairly steady trend of improvement in the amount, quality, and variety of goods available and affordable. Of course, the size of a family also determined the quantity and nature of furnishings and other goods one might find in a *casa* (house). A "family" could vary from a single bachelor or widow to the 50 "mouths" that Florentine Gianfrancesco Strozzi reported in his household.

Essential furniture was probably restricted to one or more beds (lower-class families often slept all together), a table and benches or chairs, and one or more storage chests or trunks. A bed might be no more than a woven mat on the floor or a lumpy sack filled with straw. Student lodgings, servant quarters, friars' rooms, and peasant housing often had little more. Students or friars, however, might have a writing desk and shelf for books, and a country house a fireplace equipped for cooking. Families with children added a cradle and possibly more beds as they grew older. Lighting could be rather expensive. In rooms so equipped, fireplaces or braziers cast some light. Olive oil-burning lamps were fairly inexpensive, if sooty and smoky. Candles made of tallow were more expensive, and could be burned in holders, lanterns, or sconces, or grouped in a chandelier or candelabrum. In both simple and elaborate Renaissance-era residences, specialized spaces were only just beginning to appear. Even in palazzi, cooking, eating, storage, entertaining, sex, and sleep might all take place in a single room, often identified as the chamber or *camera*.

Among the wealthier, a residence was often occupied by several generations and family branch members. It was also the major symbol of the family's success and honor, and a place where friends, family, neighbors, clients, patrons, political allies, and dignitaries gathered to enjoy the host's hospitality. Even by the

later sixteenth century houses of the elite were not crowded with furniture, as the emphasis was on quality. A palazzo's heart was the *camera*, which was foremost the master bedroom. Often furnished by the groom or his family, it centered on the large platform bed that was often surrounded by flat-topped chests. Chests of drawers appeared late only in the sixteenth century, so trunks served as storage for clothing, books, small weapons, women's toiletries, linens, and all manner of personal and household goods. Special gilded and carved or painted chests known today as *cassoni* arrived in pairs with the bride and her trousseau. These contained her treasures, from handkerchiefs to gemstones and jewelry. A carved and painted Tuscan daybed called a *lettuccio* was often purchased as a set with the bed. Its seat was a hinged chest, providing yet more storage, and its high back was painted or covered with intarsia and framed with heavily carved woodwork.

On the bed itself a large, coarse sack filled with straw acted as the springs, and was covered by an equally large sack of softer but durable fabric filled with feathers or wool flock. Pillows and cushions filled with down or feathers, a heavier bed spread or cotton batting-filled quilt, and two or three imported linens covered the mattress while matching fabric formed a curtain around the bed for warmth and privacy. A couple of benches and stools, a writing desk, small table, some shelves, religious images, a wall mirror, a bit of art, and rich fabric wall hangings and window curtains completed the suite. Children would usually sleep apart with a servant or nanny, though one imagines they sometimes shared their parents' bed.

Scholar Francesco Sansovino on Venetian "Houses," 1581

"In the past, though our ancestors were frugal they were lavish in the decoration of their houses. There are countless buildings with ceilings of bedrooms and other rooms decorated in gold and other colors and with histories painted by celebrated artists. Almost everyone has his house adorned with noble tapestries, silk drapes and gilded leather, wall hangings, and other things according to the time and season, and most of the bedrooms are furnished with bedsteads and chests, gilded and painted, so the cornices are loaded with gold. The dressers displaying silverware, porcelain, pewter and brass or damascene bronze are innumerable. In the reception rooms of great families there are racks of arms with the shields and standards of their ancestors who fought for Venice on land and sea."

Source: Chambers, David, and Brian Pullan, eds. *Venice: A Documentary History, 1450–1630*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992, p. 25.

More public was the hall, which went by various names in Florence, Venice, Rome, and Naples. It was sparsely furnished with a trestle table, benches and perhaps chairs, and a multi-shelved credenza on which the family's fine silver and ceramic ware were displayed. In Venice the floor was covered in terrazzo, a smooth mix of marble chips that gleamed when highly polished. Venetian walls featured maps, prints, portraits, family heraldry and genealogy, religious paintings, and antique shields and weapons, with plenty of room for imported tapestries displayed on special occasions. Large keyboard and bowed instruments often decorated corners. Most private was the paterfamilias's *studiolo*, a small room containing his books, antiquities, souvenirs, oddities, wonders, and other personal treasures.

Furniture and furnishings were acquired in various ways: inherited, rented, borrowed, bought at auction or from a pawn broker, specially commissioned, purchased from retail shops, as gifts, or stolen.

See also: *Arts*: Ceramics, Decorative; Daily Life in Art; Musical Instruments; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Retail Selling; *Family and Gender*: Espousal and Wedding; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; *Food and Drink*: Conduct at Table; Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Palazzi; Poverty and the Poor; Villages and Village Life; Villas; *Science and Technology*: Collecting and Collections; Libraries

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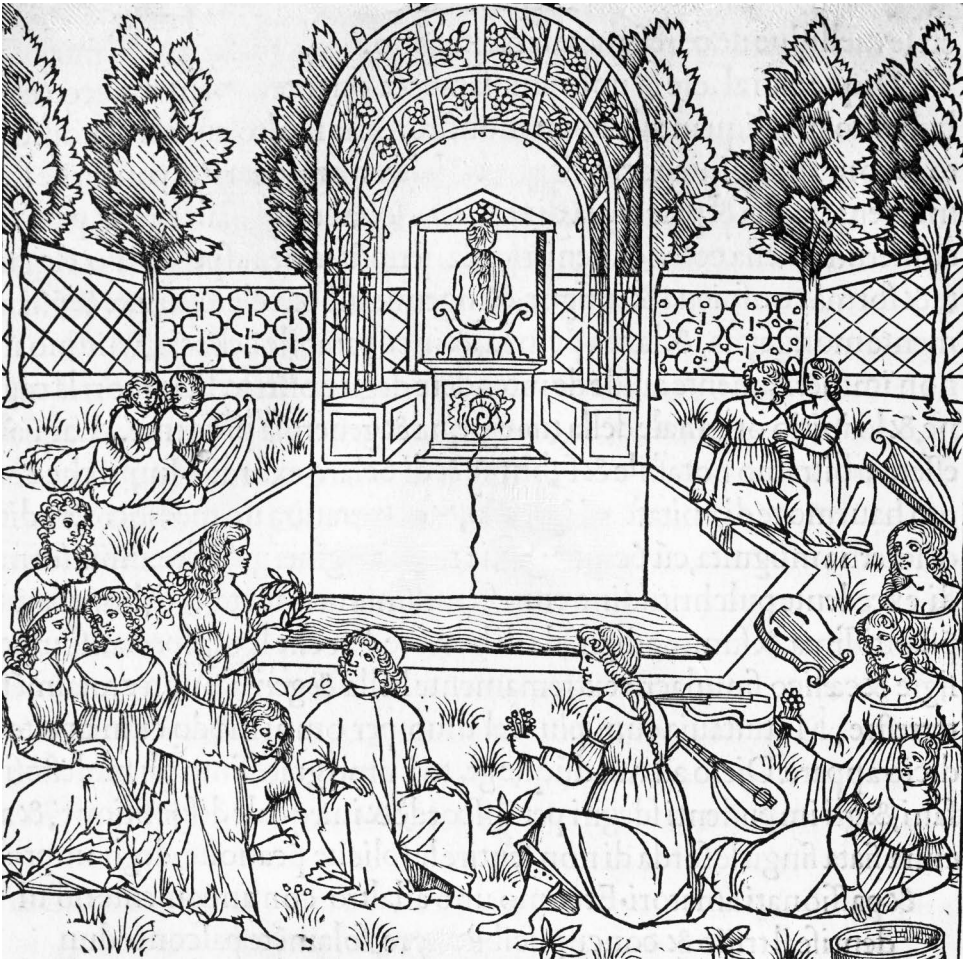
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GARDENS

Unlike most fields, vineyards, or orchards, a Renaissance garden existed for something other than an economic purpose. Botanical gardens were planted with carefully chosen specimens near palaces or universities and served as laboratories for the study of plants, especially medicinal herbs. Kitchen gardens provided palaces, monasteries, and peasant hovels alike with vegetables and herbs for their tables. A secret garden was a small, carefully planted and furnished walled outdoor space attached to a palace or villa and meant for the private use of its owner or his family. The grand gardens attached to Italian villas around Venice, Florence, Rome, and Naples were living works of engineering and art designed to impress, comfort, and entertain, and often contained a secret garden. Though the first two played important roles in furthering the study of botany and medicine and in balancing people's diets, the last is what is universally referred to as *the Renaissance Garden*.

Both Antiquity and fourteenth-century writers extolled the virtues of life in the civilized countryside, away from urban hubbub. Small rural retreats grew into villas as city dwellers renovated and expanded farmhouses and small rural fortifications. In addition to kitchen gardens owners added secret gardens, carpeted with wildflowers and lawns, whose walls disappeared behind ivy, flowering clematis, and honeysuckle vines, and tall cypress trees. In the valleys around Medici Florence fifteenth-century patricians cultivated orchards of fig, apple, sorb, plum, cherry, pear, peach, pomegranate, and lemon trees, grouping these for aesthetic effect—including their scents—within borders of boxwood or myrtle that defined shaded pathways. Fragrant herbs filled their own boxes: thyme, marjoram, hyssop, lavender, rosemary, and sage, while flowers overflowed others with textured greenery and flowers: roses, violets, crocus, irises, marigolds, and columbine. Later gardens brimmed with tulips, ranunculus, yellow jasmine, nasturtium, lilies, and hyacinth. In surrounding groves more trees began to appear solely for their looks, smells, and shade: fir, juniper, ilex, laurel, plane, oaks, and pines. The Medici themselves set the tone with the ad hoc plantings around their villa at Careggi and Villa Fiesole's terraces. Planned gardens seem to have developed only after 1500, the first perhaps the Medici's at Poggio a Caiano.

The later sixteenth century saw expensive formal gardens blanket the Veneto, Lombardy, Tuscany, and the area around Rome as dukes, cardinals, and patricians created ever more elaborate landscapes such as Florence's Boboli Gardens, the D'Este grounds at Tivoli, Villa Lante at Bagnaia, Agostino Chigi's Roman palazzo (now the Farnesina), and the ducal gardens that surrounded the city of Ferrara. The trend was shaped by medieval romances featuring sylvan bowers and verdant tournament fields, Classical works on agriculture by Columella and Theophrastus, travel reports describing the latest horticultural or mechanical achievements, works



This idealized garden is from an anonymous engraving in the 1499 Venetian edition of the dream/allegory *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* by Francesco Colonna (1432–1527). Males and females lounge about the enclosed garden surrounded by abandoned musical instruments. It is one of 168 woodcuts that illustrate the work. (DEA/A. DAGLI ORTI/De Agostini/Getty Images)

in praise of gardens such as the dialogue *The Villa*, by Milanese jurist Bartolomeo Taegio, and gradually appearing manuals, such as *Cultivation* by the Florentine Luigi Alamanni (1546). Oddly, the most famous garden, after Eden, was the Isle of Cythera in the fictional *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* by Francesco Colonna (1499).

Gardeners grafted trees and shaped them into topiary masterpieces such as ships and animals. Engineers graded the landscape, terraced it, created artificial hills and vistas, laid out complicated walkways, and built the waterworks by which to feed dozens of fountains. Geometricians laid out labyrinthine hedges both knee-high and three meters tall; masons constructed stairways, balustrades, ramps,

and retaining walls; architects added loggias, pergolas, trellises, pavilions, and even amphitheaters for performances. Owners stocked aviaries, fishponds, and menageries. Antiquities sellers peopled walkways, fountains, grottoes, and focal points with ancient statuary, while the best contemporary sculptors contributed modern. Fountains and grottoes were multimedia ensembles whose forms, statuary, plantings, and other decorative features combined with flowing, dripping, rushing, or spraying water to grab all five of the participants' senses. Some were famous, too, for surprising new visitors with drenching jets or floors that suddenly—and deliberately—flooded. Water was also the principal source of power for numerous garden machines or automata. These mechanisms might imitate people, birds, or animals and were at the cutting edge of Renaissance technology. One of the more complex was the water organ, whose bellows and pipes were powered by water and which played the same piece over and over again.

As a symbol the garden was an earthly paradise, a playground of poets, the human domination of nature, a Classical haven of lovers, nymphs, and shepherds. It was also a sign of extreme wealth and the power that accompanied it. Gunpowder had made the picturesque castle obsolete, so the villa's main house and its gardens became a projection of their owner's status and authority. It also displayed his Classical tastes and interests. The choice of statuary especially reflected his—or his advisers'—taste and intellectual interests, and so did free-standing Classical columns, miniature temples, and mythologically themed grottoes.

Grottoes

From Italian for “cave,” grottoes in Renaissance-era gardens were artificial constructions meant to look like natural features. Sited in a hillside or against a wall or simply free standing, the mouth was framed by wild landscaping. While floors were often of finished stone, walls and ceilings were covered in very spongy and rough volcanic rock studded with coral, crystals, polished stones, or bits of shiny mosaic. The careful observer might see carved amphibians, lizards, human faces, and other creatures embedded between stalactites or other concretions. Water dribbled down the wall or bubbled up in a small fountain, adding soft sound to the grotesque scene.

Practically, gardens were sites for parties and banquets, dances, concerts, tournaments, games, and theatrical performances. Travelers regularly visited the grounds of Medici villas as they do today, and the same was true of those around Rome. Some formal gardens were surrounded by an enclosed *parco* or park designed and maintained primarily for hunting. These truly extensive grounds were

usually reserved for rulers or very high nobility, whose retainers, horses, visitors, and dogs bounded through woods and meadows in pursuit of carefully raised prey. The chase was generally followed by a banquet in the garden loggia or pavilion.

See also: *Arts:* Antiquity, Cult of; Sculpture; Women Poets and Poetry; *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; Mezzadria; *Family and Gender:* Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; *Food and Drink:* Foodsellers and Markets; Fruits and Vegetables; *Housing and Community:* Palazzi; Villas; Water; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Gambling; Games and Pastimes; Noble Pursuits; Pets; Reading; Sports, Contests, and Competitions; Theater, Popular; *Science and Technology:* Agriculture and Agronomy; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Collecting and Collections; Machines and Engines; Medical Education; Pharmacopeias and Materia Medica

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HEALTH COMMISSIONS AND BOARDS

The Black Death (1347–1350) spawned a reevaluation of the roles Italian public officials played in protecting the health of citizens or subjects. Throughout the Renaissance era civic governments instituted groups responsible for overseeing public health during normal times and extraordinary measures when an epidemic struck. Their story is one of expanding governmental control and influence in the daily lives of many Italians.

In 1348, physician Gentile da Foligno provided a letter of advice, a consilium, to the physicians' organization in Perugia. Beside specific measures, he suggested that a panel of "substantial citizens" and physicians be appointed to "make arrangements for preserving the health of the people of the city." Italian cities generally had responded to crises by appointing ad hoc committees of citizens, and they did

so in 1348. Siena's had three men and Florence's *balia* eight. The Venetian Grand Council had sent a three-man group to study the epidemic in what turned out to be its earliest stages in Istria, across the Adriatic. At the end of March 1348 the Council appointed three *savi*, knowledgeable men, to initiate and oversee efforts to preserve human lives and "eliminate the corruption of the environment" (Byrne, 171) as the plague began to rage. Most medical experts during the Renaissance era posited that plague was a poisoning or "corruption" of the atmosphere, a miasma, and thus health depended on its quality. Sources of corruption were essentially anything that stank, from rotting fish to human waste. As a Florentine official put it three centuries later, "Filth is the mother of corruption of the air, and the latter is the mother of the plague" (Byrne, 172). From the start, then, public sanitation was a top priority for any health commission. By July 1348, however, physicians had added a layer to plague causation: contagion. At the board's prompting, the Senate passed laws controlling goods or people suspected of being infected. This led to practices of isolating and quarantining, which lasted to the twentieth century.

Despite the recurrence of epidemic plague, Italian authorities did not appoint permanent commissions until Venice did in 1486. Members served on the Commission of Public Health for 12 months, and the sixteenth century saw its jurisdiction expand to cover prostitutes, beggars, and provisions for the poor. The medical theory of contagion had been growing in influence, and control of vagrants, foreigners, and immigrants who might be carriers was a rational extension of public health and government control. By 1550 it had authority over physicians, drugs, hospitals, and the Jews in the Ghetto. In the 1560s the Commission decreed that all physicians practicing in Venice needed to be examined and licensed by the College of Physicians by 1567. During plague times the Commission opened and sometimes ran plague hospitals, sanctioned religious processions (or did not), and set laws against such practices as visiting victims or circulating their presumably infected possessions. During normal times it also had the authority to make demands of, or even close, markets, food shops, and noxious manufacturers such as leather tanneries. Having police powers meant that members of health commissions or boards such as Venice's could enforce their own laws, and some enforcers gained reputations for thuggery and corruption.

The Visconti of Milan gave the job of battling plague to one commissioner in 1399/1400. In 1424 one was enacting new laws in the duke's name; in 1437 there was a "commissioner for contagion"; and by 1450 this commissioner had a staff consisting of a physician, surgeon, barber, notary, two horsemen, three messengers, an assistant to keep track of the dead, and a carter and two gravediggers to deal with their bodies. Shortly after Venice acted in 1486, Milan established a similar public health commission. In the early 1520s Duke Francesco II Sforza created a five-man board with a senator as president. Three were bureaucrats and, for the first time in Italy, two were physicians. These professionals were recommended

by the College of Physicians. Oddly, physicians had usually been kept off boards, commissions, or magistracies, despite their obvious expertise.

In 1448, Florence enlisted a kind of police force and magistracy known as the Eight (*Otto*) of the Watch. Along with many other duties, it was to preserve health, stave off plague, and avoid epidemics. Though this was a permanent office, public health was only a part of its charge; as a magistracy, however, it did have powers of judgment and coercion and not just an advisory role. When plague struck, they hired four surgeons and four physicians in addition to a dozen men and 40 women to monitor the population. *Otto* members served for six months, and extraordinary powers were granted for three at a time. Florence's preference for ad hoc remedies continued as it appointed a *balia* of five in 1494 to keep plague at bay, and a group of five Officials for Disease—both plague and syphilis—two years later. In 1527, the ducal government created Florence's first permanent public health magistracy, the Officers for Health. Similar to Venice's contemporary health office, the Florentine health officers were also responsible for emergency food supplies, poor relief, and construction of shelters to warehouse the indigent. Ever the snob, Duke/Grand Duke Cosimo I insisted that each of the five members had to be a nobleman.

Across Italy, cities followed these lines of development. Perugia established a specific plague magistracy in 1523. The panel of three citizens over 60 had five consultants who represented the city's five quarters. They controlled up to 20 police who enforced laws on matters from funerals to foreign imports.

See also: *Family and Gender*: Health and Illness; *Housing and Community*: Barbers and Surgeons; Physicians; Plague; Poverty and the Poor; Sewage, Sewerage, and Public Sanitation; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; Urban Public Safety; *Science and Technology*: Plague Treatises and Consilia

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HOSPITALS AND ORPHANAGES

Hospitals, or *ospedali*, had existed in the Italian Middle Ages, and early Renaissance-era hospitals resembled them. They were often run by religious orders

and served numerous purposes. A single hospital might serve as an old folks' home, resting place for exhausted travelers, repository for abandoned children, infirmary for tending the wounded and injured, hospice for the terminally ill, asylum for the mentally disturbed, and sometimes a clinic for healing the sick. Surgeons might tend broken bones and lacerations, and apothecaries might provide pain killers and stimulants, but physicians rarely visited hospitals. These were charitable institutions supported by individual donations, rents from gifted properties, and lay confraternities or guilds who collectively oversaw a facility's finances and conditions of care. In some, residents performed tasks with commercial value, such as sewing or weaving. As for expenses, in one documented case 90% went for food and wine. Personnel, some of whom were paid, included cooks, cleaners, nurses, laundry women, and gravediggers, overseen by a guardian or supervisor. Older children or adults healthy enough to work did chores as needed. Each hospital had at least one altar, usually centrally located, and a priest visited daily for Mass, confessions, and Last Rites. Care was at least as much spiritual as physical.

Rural hospitals tended to have only a few beds and a tiny, religious staff, often from a nearby monastery. They served local folk and, if located on main roads, pilgrims, merchants, and other travelers. Urban hospitals, many of which became specialized from the later fifteenth century, varied greatly in size. In 1542 Florence's Duke Cosimo placed all hospitals and charitable facilities under his control. In 1543 a survey showed that the 76 smallest Florentine hospitals had a total of 214 beds, an average of fewer than three beds per hospital. Even adjusting for the 28 that claimed to have no beds at all, the average was only 4.5 beds. Both medieval and Renaissance-era patients slept two or three to a bed, so from 9 to 13 could be accommodated at a time. Of course, there were larger facilities. The "Goodmen" of Florence's Bigallo confraternity oversaw a dozen that averaged 15 beds—30 to 45 patients. Rome's venerable Santo Spirito served abandoned children, men (including nobles), and women, including prostitutes and pregnant girls. It was expanded in the 1470s and in 1525 had 500 residents in 150 beds.

Following the Black Death, donors and supervisors tended to consolidate smaller units into larger general hospitals, such as Siena's Santa Maria della Scala, Pisa's Santa Chiara, or Florence's Santa Maria Nuova. By the sixteenth century, however, establishments multiplied again, often serving specific clientele. In 1601 rapidly expanding Rome had 4 guild-sponsored hospitals, 19 "national" hospitals (French, Spanish, Florentine), and 17 general hospitals. Eight of these were founded during the sixteenth century, and they totaled over 2,000 beds. During plague epidemics Venice utilized a huge, isolated, open-air *lazaretto* (plague hospital) to which the sick and dying were taken. Wherever plague outbreaks occurred, hospitals rapidly filled up and other facilities had to be found. In major cities syphilitics received specialized care in hospitals for the "incurables." One of the earliest

examples was founded in Naples, where the disease was first encountered in the mid-1490s, by Ettore Venazza and Maria Lorenzo Lorusso. Two women, Maria Malpiero and Marina Grimaldi, established Venice's first in 1522. Venetians followed with the Derelitti for sick and destitute (1528); Convertite for ex-prostitutes (1530); Zitelle for abandoned girls and women (1559); and Soccorso for "fallen women" (1577). Rome's oldest hospital for the mentally ill was founded in 1548 by the Confraternity of St. Mary of Pity for the Insane. Mad Italians were usually cared for by their families or, if violent, were locked in storage rooms in prisons such as Florence's Stinche or in secured spaces in a hospital. Under the Medici dukes, 20% of the criminally insane served as oarsmen on state galleys to pay their debts or fines, and only destitute insane were admitted to Santa Maria Nuova Hospital. Part of the impetus behind the growth in all of these charitable institutions was piety fueled by Church reform, but some of it was directed by the increasingly centralizing states such as Tuscany, Venice, and the Papal States.

Some of this was a matter of rationalization. Between 1494 and 1516 seven Bolognese foundling homes run by four confraternities were consolidated into the Hospital of the Exposed run by a single consolidated confraternity. Foundlings were children from a few days old to marriageable age who were abandoned by their mother or parents. Sexual violence, shame, poverty, and mothers' deaths swelled their ranks. Orphans were children whose parents had died. Numbers soared during times of plague and war. Some orphans benefitted from parents' wills or from extended family or family friends who took them in. Those without resources ended up in hospitals and increasingly specialized orphan homes. These unfortunates lived lives little different from those of foundlings. Infants were breastfed or served goats' milk, and young children were separated by sex. Boys were taught to read and write, while girls learned textile crafts while helping to support the facility. Older boys were sent out as apprentices, while girls might find employment as servants with trustworthy families. Otherwise, boys remained until about age 16 and girls until they were married or entered a convent.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Apprentices; Putting-Out System; *Family and Gender:* Childhood; Fostering, Step Children, and Adoption; Inheritance; *Housing and Community:* Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Patronage; Plague; *Religion and Beliefs:* Confraternities; Nuns and Nunneries

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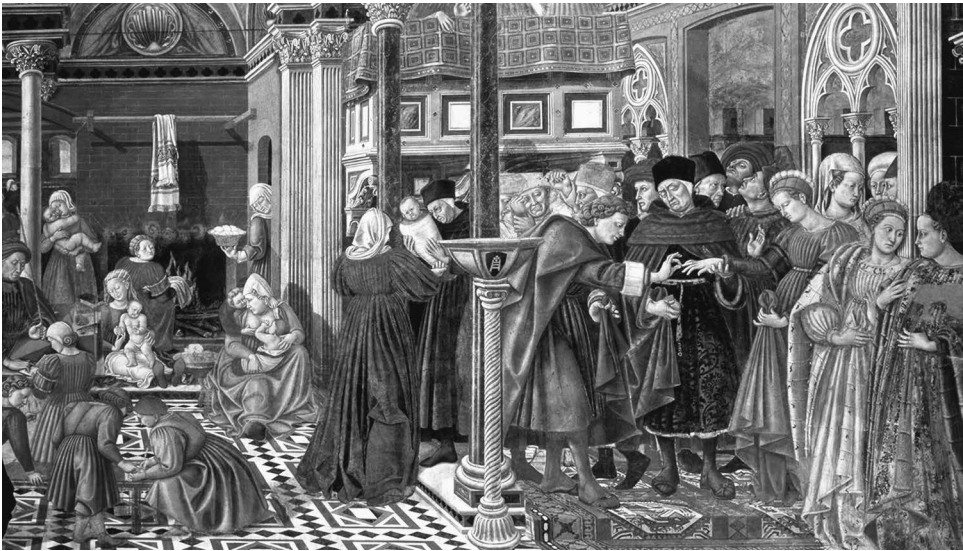
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INFANT MORTALITY AND FOUNDLING HOMES

Infants died from a multitude of causes. Accidents, disease, abuse, and even infanticide took the lives of many, and these were disproportionately girls. Although it is a flawed source, Florence's first wealth census in 1427 records a male to female ratio of 114.6/100 shortly after birth. For children from birth to age four the ratio was 119.7/100. Among urban wealthy the figure rose to 124.5/100, and the percentage of surviving females is even lower in rural areas. Whether or not Florentines did the math, they lived in a culture that clearly valued male children over female. More fifteenth-century Florentine girls than boys were left with charitable institutions: early in the century 33 boys to every 100 girls and later, 77 boys to 100 girls. In 1427 the hospital of della Scala housed 98 girls but only 41 boys. In sixteenth-century Siena the ratio was similar: 79 boys to 100 girls. Boys were also likelier to survive in institutional settings than girls. Urban girls were probably placed with rural wet nurses more often than boys, who were more likely to have been nursed by their mothers or by live-in wet nurses.

Reasons for the pro-male attitudes were bound up with the patriarchal nature of Italian society. Families needed surviving male children to carry forward the family's blood and name. Grown boys could support their elderly parents and carry out vendettas, upholding family honor. A girl's honorable future was in a convent or married into her husband's family, taking a part of her birth family's wealth in the form of her dowry. Should she become pregnant before marriage, she caused both personal and familial shame and dishonor. Her only real social value to her birth family was to marry a man of higher status and create an alliance with a more powerful family. But even this was tied to the size of her dowry.

Foundlings were the infants abandoned by their mothers or families. Young mothers who were servants, slaves, prostitutes, nuns, or simply unmarried had neither support nor resources for raising a child. Fathers might have been soldiers, rapists, careless lovers, family members, fellow slaves or servants, masters, clerics, tutors, or students. Many left their babies with hospitals, convents, nunneries, or



Satisfied patrons look on as female inmates from early infancy to marriage are cared for in Siena's Hospital of Santa Maria della Scala. The idealized fresco by Domenico di Bartolo (ca. 1402–ca. 1446) decorates one of the structure's bays. Painted ca. 1441. (Leemage/UIG via Getty Images)

neighbors. Inconvenienced fathers, employers, guardians, or masters might leave the woman's infant with an unscrupulous wet nurse who discretely disposed of the problem. Mothers and inconvenienced fathers could—and did—simply leave the infant exposed to nature to die in a ditch, cesspit, riverbank, thicket, or other lonely places. Renaissance-era civic leaders and preachers lamented and railed against such unchristian practices.

The answer was an institution dedicated to caring for the infant foundling, one of whose parents might return to claim his or her child. Though the line was sometimes blurred, these foundling homes cared for abandoned children, not those whose parents had died leaving them orphans. The orphan's family, status, wealth, and other resources were usually a matter of record, often recorded in a will. The foundling, almost by definition, was anonymous. Tradition has it that Pope Innocent III was so disturbed by children being disposed of in the Tiber River that he founded the earliest foundling home in Rome in 1198. A few followed in northern Italian cities, some run by civic authorities and some by religious. Often these were attached to hospitals, which had the staff and organization to provide some measure of care. Early Renaissance-era Florence had several hospitals that also cared for abandoned children, including Santa Maria di San Gallo, Santa Maria della Scala (1316), and Santa Maria della Misericordia. San Gallo was founded in the later 1200s in part to end “crimes against infants.”

Life and Death behind the Wheel

Many foundling homes received infants through a small revolving door (the wheel) in its wall. Sometimes the child came with a name card, proof of baptism, some money, a blanket, or toy. Housing hundreds of babies was a chore, but feeding them several times per day was even more daunting. Hired wet nurses provided human milk and goats filled in when needed. Some mothers abandoned their children only to take a job at the home, feeding her own and other children. Infectious disease in the undoubtedly unsanitary and overcrowded facilities probably accounts for the majority of institutional deaths.

In 1396 alone it cared for 150 nursing infants. Between 1395 and 1463 it tended to 853 girls and 599 boys, 62% of whom were from rural families. When he died in 1410 Tuscan merchant Francesco Datini left a large legacy to be used for a foundling home in Florence, and in 1419 the Silk Guild determined to establish it. The Hospital of the Innocents (*Innocenti*) opened in 1445 in a masterpiece of early Renaissance-style architecture. That same year the hospital della Scala was caring for over 200 infants. Between 1445 and 1453 Innocenti admitted 708 children, 59% of whom were girls. Soon it was caring for between 4 and 10% of Florence's urban children. This was unfortunate, for survival rates for institutionalized children were horrifying. At San Gallo only 32% saw their fifth birthday; 88% of those who died did so before their second birthday. In 1454, 53.5% of the inmates of the Innocenti died. At fifteenth-century San Gimignano's della Scala home, 25% died within the first month of residence. Between 1580 and 1584, Rome's Santo Spirito Hospital admitted 3,503, of whom 2,672 died (76.3%). In 1584, Perugia's Santa Maria della Misericordia took in 223 infants of whom two-thirds died while in care. In 1466, Venice's Santa Maria della Pietà declared 460 residents; in 1472 it claimed 600 infant deaths. In the 1500s it housed 800 to 1,200 children at a time. Treviso's house took in an annual average of only 31 during the fifteenth century. By statute it provided young children with food, shelter, medicine, clothing, combs for head lice, wooden shoes, and funerals.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Slaves and Slavery; *Family and Gender:* Childhood; Fostering, Step Children, and Adoption; Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing; Servants, Household; *Virtù* and Honor; *Housing and Community:* Hospitals and Orphanages; Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare:* Crime and Punishments

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JEWISH COMMUNITIES

By the mid-fourteenth century, Jewish communities had long existed in Italy. Sicily hosted some 20 fairly static groups that amounted to about 30,000 to 35,000 people. Because of legal restrictions against owning land Jews tended to settle in urban areas, so Messina, Palermo, and Syracuse were Sicilian centers, that is, until the Spanish authorities decided to expel them from Sicily in 1492, and again between 1510 and 1541. The Italian peninsula had a much more dynamic Jewish population of perhaps 25,000 to 30,000, again centered in cities. By the later sixteenth century, Rome and Venice had populations of 3,000 to 4,000 each, Ferrara and Mantua 2,000, Florence around 1,500, and Modena some 1,000. Many had deep roots in Italy, and were sometimes called Italian Jews, while others migrated from Germany after the anti-Semitic attacks associated with the Black Death in 1349, from Spain after pogroms in 1391, and after their expulsion from France in 1394.

Northern European and Mediterranean Jews differed somewhat in belonging to two large subdivisions, the Northern Ashkenazi and the Iberian and eastern Mediterranean Sephardic traditions. They spoke the languages of their homelands, and some Yiddish or Hebrew, and by no means all spoke Italian, as with any group of immigrants. Once in Italy, most Jews found toleration, if not welcome, though Genoa and Milan prohibited their residence, Venice made them live outside the city until its ghetto was established in 1516, and other cities expelled their Jews from time to time. Rome was Italy's only major city never to have expelled its Jewish population. In towns such as Florence, Ferrara, Turin, Padua, Rovigo, and Vicenza Jews chose or were convinced to live in special neighborhoods. In the sixteenth century Jews in Venice, Rome, Florence, and Siena were forcibly restricted to walled ghettos, which made monitoring and control by the Christian states much easier.

Because of ancient collective suspicion and even fear of Jews by Christians, Jewish communities lived under clear disabilities. Jews were made to stand out by wearing certain clothing or symbols when in public, so Christians would know with whom they were dealing. Jews and Christians could not intermarry. Jewish synagogues were essentially temporary in many cities, often merely the homes of wealthy bankers. Jews had to pay special taxes and periodic financial exactions as the state had need, in one case to support efforts to convert Jews to Christianity. In Rome, Jews had to run in humiliating races for the amusement of holiday crowds.

There were wealthy Jews who were bankers and physicians; there were less wealthy Jews who were pawn brokers and dealers in secondhand goods. Some Jewish women were noted for making and selling cosmetics of high quality. Jews of foreign extraction could have an exotic quality in the eyes of Italians, and their beauty products a certain cachet. Though Jews were often maltreated by Italian authorities, even to the point of being expelled, they had two clear roles in Italian communities. One regarded money. Bankers with international connections and local pawnbrokers who extended short-term credit both provided important financial services. Jewish money-lending, which today is considered terribly clichéd, really was the Jews' scourge and salvation. As non-Christians, Jews did not have to obey laws against lending money at interest (usury), and so they did. Though this was often vital to the local economy, borrowers resented their creditors, and preachers railed against the Gospel-defying usurers. Franciscans eventually responded by urging cities to establish Christian communal sources of credit called *Monti di pietà*, which directly competed with Jewish credit sources. The first appeared in Perugia in 1461, though underfunding undermined their usefulness. The ability to tax Jews whenever they wished also made Jews convenient and useful residents (rarely if ever citizens). Jewish communities were essentially cash cows, which is why their expulsions rarely lasted very long.

Houses of the Catechumens

As part of the Roman Catholic design to convert the entire world to Christ, Ignatius Loyola and his Society of Jesus (Jesuits) drew Jewish and Muslim adolescents to learn about and accept Christianity. They established special houses for catechumens—those studying for baptism—in Rome (1540s), Venice (1557), Ferrara (1561), Milan (1565), Ancona (1573), and Naples (1601). The Jesuits provided room, board, instruction, and a godfather to help with spiritual preparation. After baptism, the Confraternity of St. Joseph assisted with finding men housing and women marriage partners and dowries or places in nunneries.

Jewish physicians were also highly respected members of society, not only within Jewish communities but among Christians as well. In the sixteenth century, physicians were the only Jews allowed outside the Venetian Ghetto after dark. Master Jacob served the fifteenth-century court in Milan and in 1473 was called to Savoy to treat the duchess. Earlier in the century the physician Elia di Sabbato da Fermo not only served Milan's *signore*, but was knighted by him. He also treated Pope Martin V, was made a citizen of Rome, and was hired by the Duke of Ferrara in 1445. A century later, a Marano with a medical degree from the University of Salamanca, Amatus Lusitanus, was appointed to the medical faculty at Ferrara's university. He set up a practice in Ancona, and treated Pope Julius III in 1550 while writing seven medical casebooks. The tide turned under Pope Paul IV, when Jews in the Papal States were strictly forbidden from treating Christians. He fled Ancona for Pesaro and in 1555 moved to the Ottoman Empire.

The middle of the sixteenth century clearly marked a turning point in the situations of Jews in Italy. Harassment by preachers in the fifteenth century was replaced by persecution by the Inquisition, ghettoization, and many additional disabilities. Part of this was initiated by the revitalized Church after the Council of Trent, and part was the newly vital secular states that used the Church's anti-Semitism as an excuse for more tightly controlling their Jewish communities.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Banks and Bankers; Credit and Loans; *Family and Gender:* Education of Children; *Fashion and Appearance:* Cosmetics; *Social Status and Clothing;* *Housing and Community:* Foreign Communities; Physicians; *Politics and Warfare:* Citizenship; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Carnival; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Jews and Judaism; Preachers and Preaching; *Science and Technology:* Medical Education

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NEIGHBORHOOD AND PARISH

Renaissance-era urban geography was defined by a set of spatial overlays. First was the city itself, not necessarily bounded by its latest curtain of walls. As medieval cities grew, administrative “quarters” consisting of roughly 1/3 (Siena), 1/4 (most cities), 1/5 (Perugia, Pistoia), 1/6 (Florence, Venice, Milan), or 1/9 (Pavia) of the urban area were defined. With further growth came further divisions of these into districts or wards (*gonfalon*i, for the banners representing them) for organizing taxation, military service, and sometimes electoral purposes. Catholic parishes, or subdivisions of the bishop’s diocese, organized the map in their own ways, usually with agreed-upon boundaries though anomalies always existed. These varied in number, extent, and population, according to history and local politics. Parishes centered on the parochial church and its priest, to whom Catholics were to go at least once a year for confession and Communion. Fourteenth-century Florence, with a pre-plague population of around 100,000, had 56 parishes, and Venice 76 in 1500. Brescia had four quarters, 18 districts, and 13 parishes (but 73 churches) in 1562. Cities often had officially designated neighborhoods or *contrade*. One example was Siena, which hosted 36 parishes and 50 *contrade* that originally served the purposes of wards elsewhere. Siena’s 50 were eventually collapsed to 17, but sixteenth-century Verona retained 47 *contrade*. In the 1470s Florence’s single quarter of Santo Spirito boasted 27 *contrade*. In Venice the *contrada* was coextensive with the parish, so 76 parishes meant 76 *contrade*. *Contrada* and parish provided points of identification for residents, just as membership in a family, guild, faction, or confraternity did. Yet they were administrative areas that may or may not have defined who one’s friends or neighbors were or where one worked or shopped on a daily basis. These areas were true neighborhoods, and each resident could easily define his or hers.

The parish represented the presence of Church in the daily lives of residents. The familiar church bell rang before and during services, and when the parish confraternity gathered for praise or penitential flagellation. The church was used

for celebrations, ritual peacemaking, espousals and other notarial contracts, and liturgies and special masses for the souls of the dead, who were often buried in the walls or floor. The priest was local; in the case of Venice he was elected by householders before being installed by the bishop. He was a friend, keeper of secrets, advisor, comforter, nag, arbitrator, legal witness, and teacher of letters to children. He blessed marriages and baptized dying newborns, recommended the truly needy to the generous wealthy, and processed with the living on holidays and with the dead to their funerals. He competed with silver-tongued mendicant preachers for listeners, worshippers, and supporters, especially among the wealthy. Yet many wealthy families closely identified with their local parish church. In some cases they had long-standing patronage rights to appoint the pastor and even to draw revenue from parish properties. Some remodeled or decorated churches or added familial chapels, others financially supported annual festivals or charitable programs, or left testamentary gifts of art, altar plate, or vestments, often marked with their family crests.

Rural parishes tended to be extensive in size and lacked many of the functions of those in cities. Towns lacking bishops had *pieve* (from *plebs*, people) churches, in which baptisms could be performed. Overseen by archpriests, these generally administered smaller regional or local parishes. Sometimes, as at Prato's Santo Stefano, the *pieve* became a cathedral with a bishop of its own. Following the Council of Trent (1545–1563) parish boundaries were to be clarified and parish priests were expected to report to diocesan authorities on the spiritual state of their flocks. They were to maintain a register of Catholic residents, their relationships, and whether they were regular churchgoers.

Neighborhoods were the main social and economic building blocks of the Renaissance-era city. Geographically they might have coincided with parishes or *contrade*, but in the minds of residents they were comfort zones within which most of their personal relationships of trust and reliance were nested. They were also sources of most aggravations and strains. Some favored the wealthy, others the working class and poor, and there were Jewish ghettos and ethnic enclaves. Most, however, mixed status and occupational groups, local and specialty retail functions, and the presence of religious houses. The urban Italian was at the center of a nexus of relationships—family, friends, neighbors, vendors, social patron, employer, pawnshop, notaries, spiritual advisors—most of which were located in the neighborhood. It was bounded in residents' imaginations by streets, alleyways, churches, *piazze*, bridges, civic buildings, or walls. It seems that women's local relationships more than men's gave shape to neighborhoods since business, work, politics, and other matters took men much further afield. Transients and new arrivals found that locals formed a tight supportive unit reinforced by parish activities, ball games, circles of gossip, street festivities, a weekly market, even

history, stories, and songs. Some said that Florence was a collection of these “villages” rather than a proper city.

Some neighborhoods did host particular businesses or occupations. Venice’s Arsenale Shipyard was Europe’s largest manufacturing site, and many employees lived in the four closest *contrade*. The Lagoon city’s Murano Island featured glass-making and glassmakers, and the Giudecca Venice’s tanners. Florence’s western Oltrarno was home to wool washing and cloth dyeing, particularly odiferous activities, yet the noble Alberti family of bankers called it home due to their deep local roots.

Sacred Bells

One of the first things new visitors to a traditional Catholic country notice is the aural presence of bells. In the Renaissance every church had a tower housing a bell, and when made they were tuned to be different from existing ones nearby. The cathedral had several, but even small parish or monastic churches called worshippers with their distinctive, lone instruments. Bells chimed when Mass began and at the Consecration, and also at espousals, baptisms, and funerals. Many cities banned the tolling of funeral bells during epidemics, since the continual sound would have been deafening. Did bells chase away demons? There were those who believed so.

As civic governments worked to centralize urban political life, they found they had to diminish local particularism. When a town became subject to Milan, Florence, or Venice, local loyalties and ties were replaced: citywide guilds or confraternities replaced *contrade* or parishes in great processions or elections. In sixteenth-century Medici Florence up to 45 new gangs, *potenze*, divided up the city for ceremonies and festivals, undermining parishes, neighborhoods, and even guilds. Significantly, their headquarters were in taverns.

See also: *Arts*: Novella; *Economics and Work*: Credit and Loans; Retail Selling; *Family and Gender*: Death, Funerals, and Burial; *Food and Drink*: Foodsellers and Markets; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Jewish Communities; Poor, Aid to; Villages and Village Life; Violence within the Household and Community; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; Street Entertainment; *Religion and Beliefs*: Churches; Clergy, Catholic; Confraternities; Sacraments, Catholic

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Orphanages. See Hospitals and Orphanages**PALAZZI**

The Italian term *palazzo* only roughly translates into English as palace. Granted, popes, cardinals, dukes, and the kings of Naples lived in palazzi, but so did bishops, bankers, and merchants. The seats of city governments were also called palazzi. The vast majority of Renaissance-era palazzi were the residences of the urban patriciate: wealthy families that generally owned land and participated in manufacturing, commerce, or banking—or all three. Some were from old noble clans, and others were mere upstarts who became rich and respectable over a generation or two. Rural nobles in the south and Sicily tended to reside in medieval-style *castelli* or *rocche* that still featured defensive walls and gates, while northern and central Italian aristocrats often had villas at the center of their rural holdings. On a well-developed villa the main residence might also be referred to as the palazzo. Whether urban or rural, a family's palazzo was its headquarters and architectural face to society.

Modern visitors to Tuscany's San Gimignano are struck by the way the town bristles with tall, narrow stone towers that define its skyline-like miniature

skyscrapers. These medieval structures with their small footprints were the town-houses of the wealthy and powerful well into the 1300s. Bologna is said to have had scores, and Florence had more than 20 as late as 1450. They served as residences, warehouses, offices, and family fortresses, rallying points for allies during urban feuds and factional violence. As city governments grew in power, they truncated these to two or three stories or razed them entirely as impediments to civic peace. Wealthy and powerful families replaced these with larger, more expansive and more comfortable structures of two or three stories, often built around a central courtyard or atrium. Specialized rooms were carved out of the larger floorplans for sleeping, eating, working, and entertaining; fireplaces allowed space heating; and the courtyards had wells for handy water. Large ground floor openings to the busy street might serve as retail shopfronts or warehouse entrances. Palazzo Davanzati in Florence and Palazzo Datini in Prato (now the local state archive) are fine extant examples from the 1390s.

Many of this generation's palazzi were swallowed up in expansions of the following two generations. The fifteenth century saw a spate of new constructions or renovations of fancy urban residences across northern and central Italy. Greater concentrations of wealth, competition for social standing, and new tastes for luxury fueled by Classical models of fine living led to these developments. Elite Romans marked the return to Rome and unification of the papacy by building their rather spread-out palazzi; as Venice created its mainland empire its provincial cities soon sported worthy palazzi; and mercantile Florentines constructed around 100 new palazzi during the 1400s, 30 of the grandest between 1450 and 1478. Many emulated the examples of the Da Uzzano palazzo from about 1410 and then the much grander Medici palazzo of the 1440s and 1450s. The Florentine model of a three-story cube around an open courtyard became a model throughout northern Italy due to both Florentines settling abroad and the experience of visitors to the city. Sicily, too, slowly replaced Spanish-influenced structures with Tuscan-styled palazzi. The earliest was built by the Pisan émigré family Ajutamicristo in Palermo in 1490. The fifteenth century also saw the heyday of residential developments in the courts of northern Italy: the Este in Ferrara, Urbino of the Montefeltri, Gonzaga Mantua, and Milan under the Visconti and Sforza. Like merchants within a city, these families intermarried and vied with one another for magnificence, and their palazzi reflected their power and aspirations. Stylistically, the main influence was classicism, often expressed in architectural details such as doors, window frames, moldings, and courtyard arcades, and in wall decoration. Though many fifteenth- and sixteenth-century palazzi featured some garden space, this was often for food rather than enjoyment. Court gardens attached to noble palazzi, however, were sometimes lavish affairs, such as the famous Boboli gardens of the Medici Palazzo Pitti (from the 1550s).

Sixteenth-century wars and economic disruptions dampened the palazzo construction boom, except in Rome. Prior to the Sack of Rome in 1527 the peninsula's wealthiest families built here in the latest splendid style. After 1527, much had to be replaced. Cardinal Farnese—later Pope Paul III—began Rome's most lavish and largest non-papal Renaissance-era palazzo (1517–1589), using the talents of Antonio da Sangallo and Michelangelo.

Fresco Figures in Early Palazzi

Between 1350 and c. 1500 palazzi owners—rulers, nobles, merchants—decorated their homes with figures similar to those they had painted in civic and sacred places, including large-scale symbolic characters depicted standing alone in a niche. Seven female “Virtues” included Faith, Hope, Charity, Courage, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice. The Liberal Arts were Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy; four “Philosophies” were Philosophy (Ethics), Theology, Jurisprudence, and Poetry. Famous male “heroes” included Adam, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, David, Judas Maccabeus, Charlemagne, and King Arthur; and women the Sibyls, the Amazons, Hebrews such as Judith and Romans such as Camilla. Saints were usually protectors such as Christopher (travelers) or Sebastian (plague).

The exact form that a palazzo took was a matter of when and where it was built and how much money the family could spend. Like fortunes, palazzi often developed over a generation or two and stayed with a family only a generation or two, changing hands as families rose and fell. Palazzi typically featured a large and well-lit hall (*sala*) on the second floor, or *piano nobile*, for family and social gatherings. Sparsely furnished by our standards, the space could be easily cleared or provided with seating for receptions, banquets, concerts, plays, wedding ceremonies, balls, and family activities of all sorts. Family heraldry and portraits, old weapons, fancy maps, frescoes of the seven virtues, a religious panel or two, and Flemish tapestries might serve as decoration. Fireplaces with hoods and chimneys allowed location of kitchens anywhere in the building, and many plans have them adjacent to or very near the hall. The *camera*, or master bedroom, though containing a large bed and other intimate furnishings, was also considered social space. Here folks gathered for births, wedding nights, sicknesses, and deaths, for making wills and showing off wedding gifts. In a corner of the camera might stand the family's altar, unless there was a separate chapel. The household head might also have a study or studiolo, purely personal space in the camera or a separate room to

which he—sometimes she—could retire to read, write, or contemplate his collection of antiquities, medals, or natural oddities. The most lavish of these were in the palazzi of ruling nobility, those in Urbino and Gubbio perhaps being most famous. Small children had their own space, shared with nurses or nannies, and grown children, sometimes including married sons, their own apartments. Servants and guests would occupy the third story, alongside storage rooms, while the ground floor contained the entranceway or hall with staircase, rooms dedicated to business, and familial or business storage. Toilets, which emptied into the streets, were common, but, like bathing, bathrooms were not. Space permitting, early Roman and Bolognese palazzi had convenient porticoes or covered walkways along the buildings' faces, while those elsewhere might have a loggia or open, covered structure near or attached to the palazzo. With courtyards for greeting neighbors, or hosting meetings these both disappeared, though loggias began appearing on roofs. Here family members benefitted from privacy, wind-freshened air, and views around their city.

See also: *Arts*: Antiquity, Cult of; Art, Courtly; Ceramics, Decorative; Dance, Courtly; Music at Court; Musical Instruments; Pietre Dure and Intarsia; Portraits; Sculpture; Women and the Arts; *Economics and Work*: Construction, Building; *Family and Gender*: Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; Servants, Household; *Virtù* and Honor; *Fashion and Appearance*: Fabrics, Imported; Livery; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and Piazzes; Furnishing the House; Gardens; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: City Halls; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Noble Pursuits; Weddings; *Religion and Beliefs*: Christian Art in the Home; *Science and Technology*: Collecting and Collections

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Parish. *See* Neighborhood and Parish

PATRONAGE

Patronage—*clientelismo*—occurred when a person with few social resources—a client—received aid or support of some kind from one with relatively greater resources, with the shared expectation that the recipient was in debt to the provider. If the debt was monetary and collectible at law, then it fell outside the definition of patronage. Art patrons hired artists for agreed-upon fees; in this sense the relationship was not *clientelismo* but *mecenatismo* (from Maecenas, a Classical Roman art patron), a commercial exchange in support of the arts. *Clientelismo* operated outside family, commercial, and legal structures, and on a personal rather than formal level. If the artist's work was then donated to a church or monastery, the gift-giving might be a form of *clientelismo*, if prayers or other unspecified services were expected in return. A client's debt to a patron was generally in the form of a service, one neither contractual nor legally binding. Provisions to the poor—including

charitable or religious institutions—usually had no strings attached, beyond an expectation that the recipients would pray for the provider. Such gifts were usually considered charity, stemming from Christian love (*caritas*) and spiritual obligation. Yet regular donors to hospitals and orphanages were considered patrons who benefitted spiritually from the prayers of those they helped. Thankful recipients of regular charity often addressed their benefactor as “father,” fitting since “patron” derives from the Latin *pater*, meaning “father.”

Within networks of *clientelismo*, patrons were men of high social status or position who had economic or political connections, influence, power, or wealth that they made available to people of lower status. A patron might have been king, pope, or duke; wealthy merchant or landowner; relatively wealthy artisan or even a relatively wealthy or well-connected peasant in a position to aid or support his neighbors. Clients, in return, expected and were expected to serve the needs of the patron when occasion arose. Clients might benefit in countless ways, and owed their patrons loyalty, above all, and services from voting appropriately in elections to joining violent mobs in support of his cause. Networks of clients helped fortify patrons’ positions in society, especially in republics, and made possible the factional struggles that destabilized Renaissance-era urban life. In Florence, the Medici were masters of *clientelismo*.

In village or neighborhood the artisan who went out of his way to please wealthy or powerful customers might create a fund of good will into which his friends and neighbors could tap. The artisan might ask a notary, lawyer, or physician for professional advice regarding an acquaintance’s situation; he might ask a civic official for a favor regarding a tax bill on behalf of an abject neighbor; or he might ask an office holder to vote against a measure that would adversely affect his friend’s business. The artisan owed those whom he approached if they did what he had asked; and they further gained the gratitude of those for whom the favors were performed. The artisan could be said to have acted as a broker, a position often held by patrons.

At noble or royal courts the ruler and his family were the primary fount of patronage, regularly being approached from all quarters for gifts, positions, stipends, or references to other courts. Many courtiers were seeking benefits or looking to become patrons by virtue of their position at court. Niccolò Machiavelli famously wrote *The Prince* in 1513 as a means of attaining a job at court from the reinstated Medici in Florence. Secondary figures at court had less to offer clients, but often held the perfect position from which to help. The Master of Stables could easily find work for a client’s unemployed young male relatives, and a chaplain could easily employ a newly minted Master of Theology as a favor. In Rome, popes and cardinals, who usually hailed from Italy’s premier noble families, had wide and effective patronal networks. These men controlled wealth, land, positions in

their own entourages, and Church positions across Europe to offer potential clients. A churchman's clients might arrange marriages, erase debts, place other clients' in positions of local authority, make purchases on his patron's behalf, or support him with troops in time of war. Women at court also wielded powers that could only be called patronal. They often had to work through men at court, on whom they could in turn bestow numerous favors, from a good word in the duke's ear to gifts of land or money. A ruler's mother, if she lived at court, could be especially powerful, living through a second generation of the patronal dance.

See also: *Arts*: Art Patronage; *Economics and Work*: Banks and Bankers; Credit and Loans; Taxes and Public Finance; *Family and Gender*: Dowries; Espousal and Wedding; Families, Laboring Class; Families, Noble and Patrician; Last Wills and Testaments; Names, Personal and Family; *Virtù* and Honor; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Jewish Communities; Neighborhood and Parish; Poor, Aid to; Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare*: Citizenship; Exile and Exiles; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; *Religion and Beliefs*: Chapels; Churches; Confraternities; *Science and Technology*: Academies

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PHYSICIANS

Medical specialists came in all flavors during the Renaissance era. Wise women and herbalists gave advice on health and illness and provided remedies. Midwives helped mothers give birth. Charlatans sold medicines of varying effectiveness from

street corners and performed successful minor operations. Guild-supervised apothecaries sold a wide range of medicinal and other chemical goods, and surgeons tended concussions and stitched wounds. Other healers were more specialized: bonesetters, oculists (eyes), lithotomists (stones), and tooth-pullers. Physicians, however, had earned university degrees in theoretical and practical medicine. They spoke, read, and wrote Latin, and some read Greek. Socially they were members of the highest circles in cities and at court; and some consulted with popes, cardinals, kings, and dukes. Alone among ghettoized Jews, physicians could leave and enter at will after dark, since many Christians required their vital services. Physicians advised rulers and city councils and gave testimony in court. They joined academies and wrote on natural history and philosophy as well as medicine. In Florence, theirs was the wealthiest profession after bankers and international merchants. Yet, mired in Aristotle's flawed physiology (humoralism) and the misdirected healing practices of Galen and Hippocrates, and innocent of such fundamentals as bacteria and blood's circulation, their remedies were sometimes as dangerous as conditions they sought to cure.

In some cities the university medical degree sufficed for licensing, and in others an exam over Classical texts was required. The physician was identifiable in public by the fine black gown and biretta (hat) that marked his profession. Florentine law allowed him to wear a gold belt buckle and a fine black cloak lined with ermine or miniver fur. Urban physicians belonged to guilds of healers and sometimes colleges—boards—composed solely of physicians (Florence, 1392; Rome, 1470s; more in the 1500s). Some were salaried by governments as communal doctors to serve the needy and any others free of charge. Fourteenth-century Venice had between seven and ten in a given year and Piedmont 63 across the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Other physicians had one or more contractual positions at charitable institutions, monasteries, or court, and served well-off clients as needed. A few worked circuits in rural areas, though they could expect little in the way of cash payment. Renaissance-era Italy had a good supply of physicians compared to other parts of Europe. In 1352 Florence had 9 physicians, and 19 in 1427; between 1548 and 1565, 94 healers matriculated in the guild. In general, physicians served the well-off and the institutionalized, and others managed on their own or with less expensive healers.

Physicians rarely had offices, visiting their patients in their residences or at a surgeon's or apothecary's shop. During an examination they generally avoided direct physical contact with patients, apart from feeling the pulse or skin temperature (no thermometers yet), and checking breath, eyes, and tongue. They might also examine urine for clarity, color, granules, and other characteristics. The doctor holding a glass flask up to the light became as cliché as a modern doctor's stethoscope. His concern was for the nature of the humoral imbalance that caused

the condition, and the cause of the imbalance. Rebalancing through purging was a standard remedy. He might prescribe bleeding by a surgeon or an enema, a diuretic or laxative, or a potion from the local apothecary to induce vomiting or sweating. He might also recommend changes in lifestyle and diet or herbal supplements or additional drugs as means to aid recovery or avoid recurrence of an ailment.

Jews—like women—were usually barred from enrolling in Christian universities and thus from receiving medical degrees. Some such as Pavia, however, welcomed into their medical courses Jewish students, who usually built on empirical training obtained within the Jewish community. Many were licensed to practice by guilds or colleges, despite irrational fears of Jews as poisoners or abortionists. In Florence Jews could join the guild, though between 1310 and 1444 only ten did.

As university graduates, physicians were considered part of the intellectual elite. By the sixteenth century many were drawn to informal circles of humanists, writers, and natural historians, and early scientific academies. Some were drawn to the new chemical medicine developed by the German known as Paracelsus. Book possession was an attribute of the educated and intellectual, and physicians owned relatively large collections. In Florence's 1427 property census, 18 of 19 physicians declared books, all manuscripts, about seven or eight each and mostly medical in content. In 1468 *Maestro* (doctor) Agostino Santucci of Florence left 70 volumes in his will. By contrast, a study of 11 sixteenth-century Venetian physicians reveals a median library size of 140 books. Half of these were religious or Classical or modern literature. Part of this change was due to greater availability and cheaper prices of books after printing developed, but part may be attributed to physicians' rising sense of professionalization and their greater engagement with the culture of the day.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; Guilds; *Family and Gender:* Death, Funerals, and Burial; Health and Illness; *Fashion and Appearance:* Social Status and Clothing; *Food and Drink:* Galenic Health Regimens; *Housing and Community:* Barbers and Surgeons; Health Commissions and Boards; Jewish Communities; Plague; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Science and Technology:* Academies; Alchemy; Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Medical Education; Pharmacopeias and *Materia Medica*; Surgery

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PLAGUE

In 1347 and 1348, pestilence rolled across Italy like a slowly moving storm front. Following roads and rivers it brought disease and death to all ages and every corner of the peninsula. People weakened with fever and malaise, and then the swellings appeared in neck, armpit, and groin. Instead of developing these buboes some began to spit blood, the surest sign of imminent death. Priests, doctors, and wise women alike attributed the slaughter to God, but physicians and surgeons prattled on about miasma—poisoned air; perhaps God poisoned the air. Artists depicted plague as arrows loosed by angels. Dozens of deaths turned to scores then hundreds; soon it appeared that plague spread by some form of human contact. Many fled this, and the poisoned air, seeking to avoid the plague's horrible symptoms. Most prayed for a pass-over; others gave in to immorality and criminality as social order weakened; and some detected the world's end. Shops and houses were abandoned; crops rotted in fields; and the dead lay unburied, or piled "like lasagna" in mass graves, unmourned. Physicians, priests, and notaries died in disproportionate numbers while tending the sick, providing the last rites, or recording last wills, as did corpse collectors and gravediggers who stoically conducted their business.

In the aftermath wealth changed hands as families disappeared and wages rose in response to labor shortages in both town and contado. Cities provided incentives to new settlers and courts strove to protect orphans and their inheritances. In 1347 Venice required 25 years' residence for citizenship; in 1349 only one. Despite the deaths and flight of so many, order never really broke down, and rural migration to the cities replenished positions and empty houses. Religious orders, bishops, and guilds sped the processes leading to the priesthood or membership, sometimes



Bolognese engraver Marcantonio Raimondi (ca. 1480–ca. 1534) captures the horrors of the plague in *The Plague of Phrygia* (ca. 1515). After a lost work of Raphael, the night view of the terrified survivors dealing with the dying and dead people and animals supposedly illustrates an ancient pestilence, but mirrors the all-too-frequent reality of the sixteenth century. 198 x 252 cm. (Historical Picture Archive/Corbis via Getty Images)

promoting the unprepared. Those who predicted the end were proven wrong, but no one predicted it was only the beginning.

Between 1360 and 1401 plague returned to Italy five times. Its spread was far less systematic than before, and death tolls ran ten to 20% rather than 35 or 40%. The young and old seemed to die most readily, though modern medicine cannot explain why. After the third, and even the second, people began to realize that pestilence had become one of life's hazards, like drought or flood. The fifteenth century saw the frequency of outbreaks fall to once every 15 or 20 years, and increasingly powerful city-states established legal and institutional frameworks for dealing with plague. Venice had lost all but one physician during 1348, so 9% of new citizens were physicians, and in 1382 they were banned from leaving town during an epidemic. Venice also emphasized public sanitation to minimize miasma, controlled visitors to the city, and experimented with quarantine of suspected victims and isolation of the sick during epidemics. As many cities found, mixing the plague-sick

with other hospital residents was both dangerous and inadequate to the task. So, when plague struck, authorities began establishing special facilities called lazarettos or pest houses in existing buildings and, in the 1400s, built new quarters for plague victims.

Florence's government began passing sanitation laws in January 1348. Italian communes had long relied upon special, temporary, ad hoc citizen committees to handle emergencies such as war, and early on they applied this to plague epidemics. The earliest was in Venice in March in 1348, and consisted of three members of the Major Council. They were tasked with studying the new threat and making recommendations for public action. Yet no member was a physician, a pattern that persisted among Italian health commissions for two centuries. Florence followed in April, as did Siena and Perugia later. Ducal Milan's court ordered health measures until 1399/1400, when the duke appointed a single commissioner. In 1424 he gained the power to issue health edicts in the duke's name, and by 1450 he employed a physician, surgeon, barber, notary, horsemen, footmen, a corpse carter, and two gravediggers. In 1448 Florence shifted responsibility to the Eight Custodians, a standing committee now charged with preventing contagion and handling poor plague victims. They oversaw bread rations, 60 men and women to visit victims, four physicians and four surgeons to treat them, and 200 beds in Santa Maria Nuova Hospital to accommodate them. In 1485 Venice first appointed a full-time health magistracy with broad legal and administrative authority. Florence followed only in 1527 under the young Medici duke; his successor insisted only noblemen could serve. Such boards spread across Italy.

Pest (Plague) Houses or Lazarettos

Though Renaissance-era medicine had no clear understanding of contagion, authorities often operated on the assumption that somehow plague passed from one person to another. Isolating victims in special facilities only seemed to make sense. During outbreaks hospitals or monasteries might be emptied for these patients; some communities simply used huts or cabins outside town. Venice built the earliest special facility, in Dubrovnik, in 1377, and in Venice itself in 1403. Milan exchanged huts for a plague hospital in 1451, adding another in 1488. Florence followed in 1494 and Palermo only in the 1570s. Conditions were universally horrifying and most patients died.

Nowhere could physicians do much more than provide opiates to dull the pain. Even where they began to gain an official voice, as in sixteenth-century Milan and Palermo, the emphasis was on preventing plague's arrival and spread. This meant

coercion: in Rome authorities locked suspects in their homes or dragged them to lazarettos; burned all of victims' belongings lest they carry plague "seeds"; forcibly entered and fumigated victims' homes; and hanged anyone who interfered with these aspects of public order. As all this was done in public, the message was clear.

See also: *Arts:* Novella; *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; Slaves and Slavery; Taxes and Public Finances; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender:* Death, Funerals, and Burial; Fostering, Step Children, and Adoption; Health and Illness; Inheritance; Last Wills and Testaments; *Fashion and Appearance:* Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drink:* Drugs; *Housing and Community:* Barbers and Surgeons; Death in the Community; Health Commissions and Boards; Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Jewish Communities; Physicians; Sewage, Sewerage, and Public Sanitation; Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare:* War and Civilians; *Recreation and Social Customs:* News; Notaries; *Religion and Beliefs:* Memorials *Ex Voto*; Prophecy and Apocalypticism; Saints and Their Cults; *Science and Technology:* Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Plague Treatises and *Consilia*

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POOR, AID TO

Relief to those truly in need came readily and in many forms in Renaissance-era Italy. The theory behind them all was that the effects of poverty should be made tolerable, though attempts to eliminate poverty were hopeless. Helping the poor was a Christian imperative, a keen arrow in every preacher's quiver against greed

and the evils of wealth. The theory continued: those who aid the poor will gain spiritual rewards, even salvation, and make up for a multitude of sins. The rich and poor lived in a kind of symbiosis. Following the Gospel story, unless the rich man feeds Lazarus, the beggar's body dies but the rich man's soul suffers eternally. Other spurs to giving included simple human pity, social recognition as a charitable Christian, or, in time of societal stress such as famine, war, or plague, the communal realization that the dissatisfied poor could be a very destabilizing force. Supporting the poor had very practical as well as spiritual benefits.

Individuals could benefit those in need in many ways; of course, the wealthier one was the more likely one was to help. Rulers in cities such as Palermo, Naples, Ferrara, or Turin made contributions in kind to those who lined up for weekly donations or at special times in the Christian calendar. At the other end of the social spectrum, even poorer folks dropped small coins in the poor boxes maintained in parish and mendicant churches. Some people shared a bit with beggars who sat on church steps or circulated in markets. Collections for those on whom hard times fell were taken up in churches and taverns, especially if it meant supporting a woman with children. The wealthy were often solicited for alms of various kinds. Girls needed help with dowries, fathers landed in debtors' prison, children were dressed in rags, widows could not pay rent. Easily recognized by their finery, rich families coming from church or in the streets on special holidays might be approached. Advocates who could solicit more formally on behalf of the needy might include notaries, family friends, friars, or neighbors, as surviving letters attest. Among the 10,000 personal letters in the files of Tuscan merchant Francesco Datini are many that plead for specific help for a third party. Assurances that gifts would be "good alms" meant that recipients were upright and truly needy. Since they were expected to pray in thanks to God on behalf of the benefactor, their moral state was a very real consideration.

Individuals also left benefactions in their wills, hoping to make up in death what they failed to do while alive. Some arranged for gifts of money or cloth to be given to the poor who accompanied their funeral procession; others made specific gifts to needy friends or others known to them; some legacies were in kind (cloth and clothing, especially) or in the form of dowries or additions to dowries for poor girls. Donations to charitable organizations indirectly benefited the poor, while a few wealthy, like Datini, founded and supported their own charitable institutions. Finally, many men joined confraternities whose purpose was to provide aid. These donated time to gathering and distributing gifts or otherwise helping the poor by making house repairs or teaching poor children.

Monasteries and convents had regularly supported the poor who arrived at their doors, and many continued to do so. In cities, however, lay brotherhoods took up much of the responsibility. Charitable confraternities conducted a wide

range of activities, from distributing alms to running hospitals. They made regular donations to the area's poor, especially in kind (bread, cloth, clothing, shoes, rent money, or the provision of shelter). On days special to the Church, confraternity, or city they distributed food and money. Local poor people brought their needs to the group and, if found worthy, often had these met. As with rich individuals, confraternities also considered requests of third parties on behalf of the needy. Confraternities even played important relief roles during emergencies, including siege, influxes of refugees, famine, and plague. Because cash could be misused, recipients often received in-kind gifts of food, flour, grain, wine, or wood for fires; cloth, clothing, or shoes; shelter and blankets. Whether or not they ran orphanages or foundling homes, confraternity members helped place boys in apprentice positions and older girls as servants in trustworthy homes. Some helped to provide girls with dowries to marry or the fees necessary to join a monastery or convent. Others specialized in helping those in prison with wood, clothing, and Christian burial when necessary. Wills often contained bequests to support confraternal projects, and the brothers were trusted to use it as specified. In some cases a wealthy benefactor established a trust with a specific function; smaller gifts supported it, furthering the cause.

Civic governments were often hostile to the poor, forcing them to be licensed to beg or driving them out of city gates. Communal largesse during famine, siege, or plague was insurance against rioting rather than humanitarian aid, and *monti di pietà* that made getting small loans easier were a way of undermining the Jews rather than helping the poor.

See also: *Family and Gender:* Last Wills and Testaments; Old Age; Widows; *Housing and Community:* Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Poverty and the Poor; Prisons; *Religion and Beliefs:* Confraternities; Friars; Preachers and Preaching

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POVERTY AND THE POOR

God made the poor just as He made the wealthy rich. But not all poor were poor in the same way. Peasants with few material possessions to show for their efforts were poor, but had shelter, clothing, a source of food, and community, even if all were equally impoverished. There were the shame-faced poor, who were forced by circumstances to rely on the kindness of strangers: the laborer injured or too ill to work; the family whose meager wealth was destroyed by fire; the pilgrim waylaid and left for dead; the father in debtors' prison; the war refugee. Society also recognized the deserving poor: the crippled, the poor widow with children, or the orphaned or abandoned child. Monks, nuns, and friars were technically poor, since they individually owned nothing, and friars supposedly begged and depended entirely on donations. Theirs was considered a truly holy poverty or conversely a scam. Truly fraudulent were those who went about feigning blindness, leprosy, or other sympathy-milking conditions while being perfectly capable of earning a living. The charitable tried their best to avoid such rogues, as well as those who lost their incomes to drunkenness, gambling, or other vices.

Poverty brought a wide range of living conditions, none of which was desirable. The vagabond was a rootless drifter who called no place home. Meals might be given by the sympathetic or stolen from the unwary. Usually male and probably able to work, he might earn enough doing odd jobs or performing unskilled labor to get by and move on. Poor peasant housing might mean little more than a rickety, dirt-floored hut of one or two small rooms and a pot to cook in. Clothing was scarce and food limited in caloric and nutritional value, but access to land could mean fresh or preserved vegetables, herbs, and eggs. High medieval urban growth had meant that cities could employ almost anyone who arrived. That picture changed during the fourteenth century. While plague deaths generally caused wages to rise, these eventually drew more new labor than the cities could absorb. Crises also attracted the destitute to cities in search of food, shelter, or medical help. Between 1437 and 1513, 20 northern Italian cities built hospitals to house, feed, and tend to the poor as well as the ill. One was Milan's Ospedale Maggiore (1459–1464), designed by architect Antonio Filarete and coordinated by the Office of Pity for the Poor (est. 1406). Beggars or working poor might afford to rent a mattress in an old, dilapidated room shared with others, or a couple of dirty and dark rooms in the same building. Quality food could come from civic or confraternal charity, and markets sold none-too-fresh groceries and meat cheaply at the end of the day. Fourteenth-century Pavia allowed sale of diseased animal meat only to the poor and only in front of the cathedral. An urban poor person's diet probably consisted largely of wheat bread or grains boiled into mush, porridge, or thin *minestrone*. Vegetables, cheap wine, a bit of cheese or a couple of eggs, and some of

that diseased meat might round out a day's fare. Having to provide for children often led to their being abandoned at foundling homes.

Poverty brought violence and crime as poor people vied with each other for scarce resources, and as they resorted to theft or unauthorized prostitution to get by. The better off often resented the poor and sometimes treated them violently, despite popular preaching sanctifying both poverty and charity. By the fifteenth century the poor were associated with, if not blamed for, plague and other diseases. Plague often did start in poverty-ridden areas of town, and lack of hygiene invited body lice that caused typhus. Like most people, the poor rarely bathed, but unlike most they had only few bits of clothing and no means by which to launder them. In winter they rarely if ever changed clothing and probably slept in a bed with several others, whether family or not.

When a city was stressed or threatened by plague or food shortages due to famine or war, its authorities often reacted by expelling "the poor" or specific groups of them. Venice routinely kicked out foreign beggars. As famine loomed in 1590 Bologna drove out "the poor" and Naples poor non-citizens and university students. In 1591, Mantua's ruler expelled nonskilled or poor foreigners from the Duchy, and assigned native-born poor to hospitals or forced labor details.

War, urban growth, centralization of secular political power, and the multiplication of the poor led sixteenth-century civic authorities to confine and coerce. Rome in 1556 tried to confine vagabonds to the area around Piazza del Popolo, away from the city's center; in 1561 it outlawed begging within city limits; and from 1581 to 1583 it kept some 850 poor people locked away in the ex-Dominican convent of San Sisto. In 1563 Bologna rounded up 800 poverty-stricken in the ex-convent of San Gregorio. These exercises in state control over the bodies of the poor rarely succeeded. Historians today view the treatment of the destitute in a given city at a given time as indicative of the stage of that city along a chronological line of development. This historical development ran from late medieval provision of alms by the wealthy and religious houses to the emergence of charitable hospitals in the fifteenth century to state coercion, expulsion, and institutionalization in the sixteenth.

See also: *Family and Gender:* Old Age; Widows; *Food and Drink:* Diet and Social Status; Hunger and Famine; Nutrition: A Modern Assessment; *Housing and Community:* Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Poor, Aid to; Prisons; *Religion and Beliefs:* Confraternities; Friars; Preachers and Preaching

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PRISONS

Some Renaissance-era Italian prisons remain famous. Prisoners crossed the shining limestone Bridge of Sighs over the Rio di Palazzo from the Venetian Doge's courts before descending into the oppressive dank of the New Prison. The popes in Rome kept political prisoners as well as heretics and personal enemies in the depths of the Castel Sant'Angelo, the drum-shaped former tomb of Roman emperor Hadrian. Florentine debtors who could not afford to pay their creditors were relegated to the aptly named Stinche (steen-kay) prison. Its 44-foot high walls seemed to keep even hope outside. In the eighteenth century Italian artist Giovanni Battista Piranesi produced a series of nightmarish prints titled *The Prisons*. Cold black ink forms rough stone walls from which project scarred wooden beams from which dangle chains and pulleys. Precipitous stairways wander up to apparently nowhere, and ragged heavy iron bars criss-cross one another to form cages from which only the rats might escape.

While Piranesi's bleak, gothic visions were largely imaginary, the realities two centuries earlier were hardly more humane. By all accounts, whether the facilities belonged to civic or religious authorities, royal or ducal rulers, they were hell holes. Depending on the time and place, Italian prisons were overcrowded, under-ventilated, and poorly heated; or prisoners languished in solitude in tiny cells with little food and less light. Walls were often moldy and damp and floors flooded; few provisions were made for hygiene, and fewer for rats, insects, and disease. Few prisons provided food, which otherwise had to come from families or as alms from confraternities. Inmates suffered from anger, resentment, shame, despair, and what modern doctors would diagnose as depression, anxiety, and other emotional ailments. Social problems included gambling, rape, prostitution, violence among inmates, drunkenness, and corruption of guards. When disease struck, prisoners could only wait until it—or they—passed. Yet plague deaths reported by authorities were surprisingly few. During the plague year of 1348 Florentine prisons suffered only 25. From 1332 to 1387 only seven died while in Venetian custody (apart from those executed).

Built to be a prison in 1304, the fourteenth-century Stinche had a staff of four supervisors, three to six guards, a chamberlain, scribe (for confessions, wills, and messages), water-carrier, physician on call, grave digger, and two lay friars. One account claims that in 1346 the Stinche held 600 prisoners at one time. In the 1570s there averaged 181 inmates per year. Like most, it had no individual cells but six large rooms. There were old and new sections for men, one each for women and higher-class magnates, and the upper and lower *malevato*, which provided rather better quarters for those who could pay. In 1359 a special space for insane people was added. There were a small inner courtyard for air and minimal exercise, a small infirmary, and a tiny chapel. By the sixteenth century the adjacent *forzati* embankment contained the graves of 200 paupers who had died in custody. Debtors' sentences lasted typically from six months to two years, or until friends and relatives could pay off the overdue debt or unpaid fine. In 1428, Florence began allowing charitable "good men" to help debtors gain the funds necessary for release. Criminal and political prisoners were kept in the prison of the Podestà, the Bargello. Facing fines, corporal punishment, exile, or death, these prisoners were usually short-timers. For an increasing number, however, time in jail was preferable to difficult-to-pay fines, so many sentences for the poor were commuted to temporary imprisonment.

Like Bologna and other cities, medieval Siena had rented old noble towers as prisons until 1330, when it opened a purpose-built prison attached to the Palazzo Pubblico. It contained spaces for pretrial custody, interrogation and torture, and longer-term debtors. In Venice in 1350, half of all criminal sentences included prison time. Each of the city's six quarters had holding cells for criminals awaiting trial at the Doge's Palace. Women were held in female monasteries. At the central prison guards represented each of the city's quarters lest rivalries or sympathies influence treatment. The first infirmary opened only in 1563 following an outbreak of typhus. Charity and communal stores fed prisoners, but the poor remained without other resources until 1442. Venice decided to follow the practice in Florence, Padua, Vicenza, and Ravenna and provide advocates to represent the needs of the indigent, who in Venice were often immigrants from the east. Many cities, except Venice, released prisoners on festival days and at Christmas and Easter. Siena routinely released a dozen at Christmas, Easter, and the Feast of the Assumption. When the Stinche was bursting with 600 inmates in 1346, authorities released 200 at Christmas. These amnesties were considered charitable acts and those released were considered penitents, in some cities donning white robes and carrying candles as they left incarceration. Located in the very center of towns, prisons were public stages for civic morality plays, as prisoners performed the roles of the criminal, the chastised and reformed, and the penitent, while the state played the fount of justice, punishment, and sometimes mercy.

The most famous contemporary description of an Italian prison was penned by the visiting Swiss Dominican friar Felix Fabri in 1484. He wrote of the wails and laments of the poorest inmates who hung out of a window begging for alms, bread, and mercy; the wealthy playing chess and chatting with family through a window; the artisans cobbling goods together to make money; and the old Jew who had hanged himself. Fabri was a reformer who wanted to renovate German prisons along Italian lines.

See also: *Family and Gender*: Homosexuality and Sodomy; *Housing and Community*: Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; Crime and Punishments; Urban Public Safety; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Executions; Madness; *Religion and Beliefs*: Inquisitions; Protestantism; Witches and Sorcerers; *Primary Document*: Awaiting the Executioner: Florentine Writer Luca della Robbia on the Death Vigil and Death of His Friend Pietro Pagolo Boscoli (1513)

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QUACKS, CHARLATANS, AND MEDICAL EMPIRICS

When the body needed healing, or merely improving, the Renaissance-era Italian had a number of options. Most expensive and least accessible was the university-trained professional physician. For treatment he usually relied on organic medicines obtained from the local apothecary, the licensed pharmacist who could also advise and sell drugs directly to the public. For teeth, bones, wounds, and the occasional medicinal bleeding one visited the shop of the surgeon or barber-surgeon, who, like the apothecary, had been trained through apprenticeship, held a license, and belonged to a craft guild. At the far end of the spectrum were the folk-healers with special powers or secret knowledge on whom the desperate relied for everything from finding love to curing a dying child.

In the middle were medical practitioners whose practices were unlicensed and unregulated, whose training was a matter of carefully planted gossip, and whose

presence in a community was often fleeting. Elizabethan-era English visitor Fynes Moryson noted having met these often colorful characters, whom he indiscriminately labeled charlatans (from *ciarlare*, to “chatter”), mountebanks (to climb atop a bench or makeshift stage), and *empiricks*. The first two terms recognized their means of advertising their goods and services: standing out in public extolling what they offered in exaggerated speech or song to whoever would listen. The term empiric signaled that theirs was a practice or product founded on experience and trial rather than formal education in the day’s medical theories. Nor were they enrolled in guilds or colleges that tested and regulated practitioners. The term quack, not Italian but more familiar to American ears, seems to have derived from quacksalver, or one who used quicksilver—mercury or its compounds—in their salves or other preparations.

Usually itinerant, the healer arrived in a town with as much fanfare as he could afford, aided by assistants or hired musicians, prop men, and shills whose dramatic “recoveries” would fortify his reputation. By the sixteenth century printed handbills or small posters might precede or accompany his arrival. He might use performance of poetry, such as the popular *Orlando furioso*, or an amusing parody of it to draw a crowd to his stage or cart. Singing of popular local songs or a bombastic speech praising the community might also attract potential customers. He had carefully chosen his stage name and the names of his products to sound genuinely therapeutic, exotic, biblical, mystical, or Classical. In his big pitch he would make claims, sometimes outrageous, of the benefits—yea, miracles!—that would attend the usage of said ointment, salve, potion, powder, elixir, antidote, cream, balm, pills, or treatment. Money for the products was tied into handkerchiefs and thrown onstage, where it was replaced with the promised package, tied up, and tossed back to the customer. Powders were dispensed in small paper cones, while creams and ointments were sealed in small jars. While some products may have contained useful ingredients, such as opium or a purgative that produced vomiting or a bowel movement, others have been shown to have had no effect or to have been dangerous. A number of Italian empirics embraced the non-organic chemical medicines pioneered by the sixteenth-century German Paracelsus and peddled these as panaceas. Some of these traveling medicos also had skills in procedures usually performed by surgeons such as tooth-pulling, cataract removal, and setting broken bones.

The demand for extraordinary medical treatments was constant, but these healers were especially welcome in times of plague. Not only was demand for medical help heightened, but many elite practitioners left town or died. Even when physicians were available, unless the community had forced them to attend the poor, the going rate for service was very high. Despite their distaste for empirics, civic

medical boards, colleges, and guilds allowed their emergency services without complaint and some communities even hired them as public servants. In 1517 Bologna put all medical practitioners, resident or itinerant, under the regulation of the protomedicato board, which consisted of the dean of the medical school and two professors. Before 1567 Venice licensed physicians only, yet they prosecuted only 10 irregular healers between 1545 and 1560. In 1567 the Venetian College of Physicians was given the power to license empirics, while unlicensed practice resulted in 18 months of service as a galley slave. Larger communities used censorship of unauthorized printed bills and pamphlets to limit the charlatan's practice in the later sixteenth century.

For many villagers the itinerant healer was the only “professional” they would ever see. While the village was hardly a goldmine, it was a place a charlatan could try out new advertising material or even products. It might be a place one could stay under the radar if a treatment had gone wrong or if some scam had been uncovered. As well, there was healing wisdom in rural communities, and the astute empiric kept eyes and ears open for anything novel, especially if it seemed successful.

There was a marketplace for medical services in Renaissance-era Italy, and for the most part physicians and irregular healers used similar methods to treat different clientele. The wealthy shied away from mountebanks with their questionable credentials and dubious claims, but rural folk likewise distrusted the haughty urban professionals, with their indecipherable Latin and expensive drugs. And anyway, the mountebanks put on a better show.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; Apprentices; Guilds; Retail Selling; *Family and Gender:* Fertility, Conception, and Contraception; Health and Illness; *Food and Drink:* Drugs; *Housing and Community:* Health Commissions and Boards; Physicians; Plague; Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare:* Crime and Punishments; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Civic Festivals; News; Songs and Singing, Popular; Street Entertainment; Taverns and Inns; Theater, Popular; *Science and Technology:* Alchemy; Medical Education

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SEWAGE, SEWERAGE, AND PUBLIC SANITATION

Ancient Rome had sewers, at least the wealthy who lived on its hills did. Just as gravity brought water down from the surrounding mountains via aqueducts, so gravity drained away the filth generated by Roman patricians. Runoff from aqueducts even helped sluice sewers into the Tiber. The ancient Romans were engineers, but Goths, Lombards, and Carolingians were not. When Rome fell, so did its sophisticated sewer system. The revival of Italian cities beginning in the eleventh century produced minimal problems of waste disposal as urban populations were low. They grew, however, and by the early fourteenth century Florence and Milan had about 100,000 residents each. Across Italy the Black Death (1347–1352) reduced these numbers, but it also underlined the necessity of effectively handling the waste whose corruption and stench were believed to poison the air and cause epidemic disease. Sanitation was both a matter of cleanliness and healthfulness. Proper covered sewers would be a long time in coming, even in major cities, but Renaissance-era Italians did take important steps toward cleaning up their urban environments.

But then, the environment was expected to absorb humans' waste products. Feces was buried in cesspits, or laid on fields, or deposited in rivers. Until Florence's Cosimo I had Giorgio Vasari relocate jewelers and goldsmiths to the Ponte Vecchio, the old bridge over the Arno was occupied by butchers who dumped animal waste into the river, itself a move to improve public sanitation. Rivers were the age's natural sewers. Into rivers went day-old fish, animal carcasses, nasty industrial waste from dyers and leather-tanners, and the occasional human corpse.

Household waste had three destinations. Where population density was not too high, residences had cesspits "around back." Essentially a well into which all manner of waste was dumped, these were fine if occasionally dug out or capped. Problems arose when they became filled, or heavy rains or floodwaters caused them to overflow. Steady rains and minor flooding actually helped with the second destination: the streets. After rivers, streets were the next thing to sewers in most Renaissance-era cities. Animals routinely deposited their own waste, so humans tossing theirs were simply adding to the muck. Where streets were paved, the surfaces were not smooth as with modern roadways, so even here cleaning was difficult. Where streets were not paved, the roadway was blended with added filth to create a malodorous mud. Horses' hooves, cartwheels, and human feet kept new layers from simply forming on top. In some places open ditches lined the streets to receive waste materials. Florence required that these be cleaned out twice per year. The third destination actually put much of the waste to use. In some places urine was regularly collected in buckets for use in industrial processes. What

were elsewhere called night-soil men collected human and animal turds for use as manure in gardens and local fields.

Even before the plague first struck, city governments sought to keep their streets cleaner as a way of curbing stench and the disease it was believed to cause. Paving was one priority. Once paved, streets could be more easily cleaned, so statutes provided for private or public efforts to keep filth down. Laws also kept some noxious industries located near waterways or at least outside and downstream of town. During and after the first plague outbreak Italian authorities redoubled these efforts. Some were wild swings, as when Florentines were told in 1348 to remove “any putrid thing” from the city. Pistoia targeted the dead, insisting that they be buried in sealed coffins at least six feet underground. It also targeted fresh meat, insisting that it be kept apart from any putrefying stench. Health regulations limited how long fresh meat and fish could be kept to sell. During epidemics, goods from known plague areas were banned, lest they infect people; funerals were banned or strictly controlled to diminish human contact and infection; and even tolling bells for the dead was often halted lest it cause melancholia, or depression. Fifteenth and early sixteenth-century measures were largely more of the same. But during the sixteenth century health measures during plague gained new wrinkles. People suspected of being infected were forcibly locked up in their houses or in special plague hospitals to isolate them, with their possessions seized and often destroyed. On its way to absolutism, the early modern state acted often and harshly. From 1575 to 1600 Verona’s city government passed no fewer than 278 ordinances related to public sanitation, an average of almost one per month.

Indoor Toilets

A toilet is a hole over a passage to a dump or sewer below. A comfortable toilet has a seat. Fifteenth-century architects Alberti, Filarete, and Francesco Martini championed adequate facilities, and Martini stipulated these should be accessible, comfortable, and stench-free. Some were just a narrow wall niche with a seat atop a built-in box situated over a cesspit, cesspool, or chamber pot. A Perugian illustration shows a small upper room bridging adjacent houses. It deposited into an open outdoor pit below. Portable facilities could be stools or chairs with open seats above a chamber pot, a fancy version of which was used by Florence’s leader in Palazzo Vecchio in 1512.

Public health was also a matter of upholding morals and keeping God satisfied. Having Jews who denied Christ around made some Italians nervous, but there were no violent pogroms like those in the Rhineland. Labeling them with special clothing

or badges or occasionally expelling them sufficed, and could actually be considered public health measures. During the sixteenth century sanitation came to mean social control as well as cleanliness and health. Residents and others had to be forced to comply with waste disposal regulations; prostitutes, who constituted both a physical health and moral health threat, had to be regulated; and some poor—of whom it was believed their willfully immoral behaviors caused them to fall into poverty—banished or penned in and monitored. The conjunction of perceived immorality, poverty, squalor, and disease made the urban poor special targets of the developing state.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Construction, Building; Manufacturing; Retail Selling; *Fashion and Appearance*: Bathing and Personal Hygiene; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Health Commissions and Boards; Plague; Water; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; Urban Councils and Assemblies; *Science and Technology*: Medical Education; Plague Treatises and Consilia

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Surgeons. *See* Barbers and Surgeons

TRANSPORTATION, LOCAL

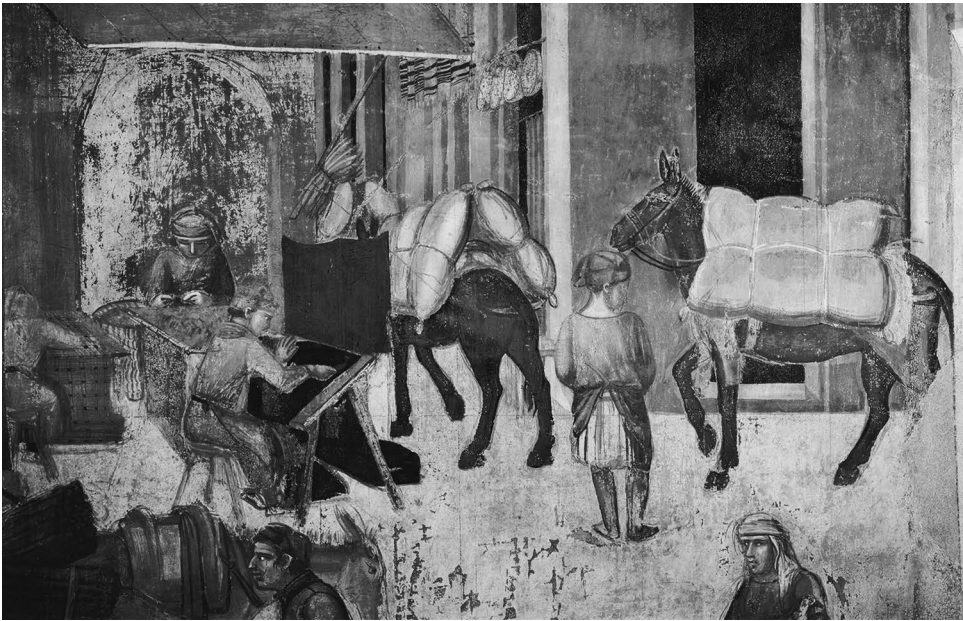
Renaissance-era Europe has long been noted for its great voyages of discovery and settlement. These were made possible by the period's advances in naval technology and navigation. Transportation within or between cities in Italy, however, underwent no such change. The single innovation of any importance was the horse-drawn carriage. Italians relied on human and animal power on the land, and on Italy's waterways human and animal power, the wind, and downriver current.

Much of what was moved from one place to another was carried on the backs of people. Slaves, servants, wives, and water-carriers moved water from streams,

fountains, wells, and other sources to private kitchens. Street vendors often carried their wares on their backs; farm women carried produce into market and returned with food and other needed items for the family; laundresses carried dirty clothing to the local wash site and the cleaned laundry back to its owners. The wealthy could be carried above the filthy streets on litters borne by their servants or slaves. Much more efficient for some purposes were wheeled hand-carts and hand-trucks. These could carry considerably more than could a single person, but the state of most urban streets and alleys made for very rough going. For sacks of grain or a side of beef this presented few problems, but anything fragile would certainly suffer. Where paved, streets were uneven and could shake all but the best-built vehicles to pieces. Where unpaved, a human-powered cart would founder in the vile muck and mire after a heavy rain.

Animal power was far greater than human power. Horses, mules, and donkeys both served as pack animals and powered much larger carts than humans could. In the countryside oxen were harnessed as well. People rode horses, mules, and donkeys if they could afford to. Riding in a city was as much a status statement as a convenience. Four-footed travel between towns cut time and effort, and only the indigent, infantry, and members of certain religious orders walked long distances. Even poor peasants knew someone from whom they could borrow an animal. Much of the food conveyed from rural areas to city markets was carried on pack animals belonging to small farmers or rich landowners. Between cities, too, pack animals were often preferred to wheeled vehicles because of the poor conditions of many roads. Animals needed to be fed, watered, and rested frequently, and major routes were surprisingly well served by inns and other facilities that also catered to animals.

Animals also pulled wheeled vehicles of various types. Sturdy four-wheeled carts were probably most common, as they provided a stable platform onto which to load heavy and bulky goods. Tumbrels were two-wheeled carts that could be tipped on their single axles to dump their loads. During severe epidemics, corpses were piled on these as they passed through town, eventually dumping their grisly cargoes into mass burial pits. On the lighter side was a donkey cart loaded with farm produce for delivery to market or for sale directly to customers along its route. The four-wheeled carriage for moving people appeared by the later sixteenth century. With poor suspensions, they were far from comfortable. If roads were good, however, four horses pulling a relatively light carriage would have made fairly good time. The term carriage could also mean a vehicle for moving goods, as in a case from Treviso. The hospital and confraternity of the flagellants owned a four-horse “carriage” that was to be used for confraternity purposes, especially transporting wine, wood, grain, and hay. With permission, Trevisan citizens could borrow it to go to Padua or Venice; gentlemen and judges could use it to transport goods to



This view of laden pack animals in front of a weaver's shop is from the idealized view of Siena, located in the Hall of Peace in Siena's Palazzo Pubblico. With his fresco titled *Allegory (or Effects) of Good Government* (1338–1339), Ambrogio Lorenzetti (ca. 1290–1348) hoped to inspire Siena's government to remain virtuous. For us it is a reminder of the important role of pack animals in urban settings. (Alinari Archives/Corbis via Getty Images)

Vicenza or Padua; and the Venetian governor or *podestà* could use it at any time to take him or his family anywhere. The brotherhood even provided a driver.

Goods and people also traveled by water along Italy's coasts and through the well-watered northern plain. Flat-bottomed ferries carried animals, people, and wheeled conveyances across rivers at points lacking bridges. Large barges moved bulky goods up and down rivers and across lakes, and many types of boats transported people and goods. Where currents did not flow in the desired direction, paddles, oars, sails, or rope-towing oxen could provide the necessary power. Using maritime routes between, for example, Livorno and Genoa or Naples and Livorno or Messina and Palermo made sense for even small commercial shipments. Seaworthy vessels plied the waters regularly, while coastal naval ships trawled for pirates and slavers.

If one is to believe sixteenth-century author Cesare Vecellio, the stretch limo of the later sixteenth century was the Venetian gondola. Compared to the miseries of horseback riding or the clatter and jostle of the best of carriages, the smooth, silent glide of the gondola was bliss. The long, sleek vessels remain icons of the city, though visitors have to imagine the canals without motorboats and their disruptive

wakes. Gondolas were owned by the wealthy and rented like taxicabs by everyone else. There was a guild of distinctively dressed gondoliers that maintained a high level of public service and a minimum of cheating and theft. Each boat had two operators: at the rear was the rudder-man and about midway down the oarsman. The owner's or customer's experience was modern in its convenience and comfort. Travel was from door to door; seats were of padded leather; and riders sat beneath a canopy that protected from rain or sun. Some boatmen could sing, as they still famously do, or a fare could bring a musician or two. Several revelers could easily fit to make for a party, complete with food and wine. Modernity could hardly improve on the experience: so it hasn't.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Construction, Building; Retail Selling; Trade Routes, Overland; *Food and Drink*: Foodsellers and Markets; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Water; *Religion and Beliefs*: Pilgrims and Shrines

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VILLAGES AND VILLAGE LIFE

The vast majority of scholarship on the Renaissance era concerns cities and their residents. In part this is due to the nature of surviving evidence, and in part to the fascinating nature of urban life. Renaissance culture was centered in cities, along with governments, cathedrals, universities, important marketplaces, hospitals, libraries, and nobles' palazzi. The countryside was often viewed as something akin to a bathroom in a mansion: absolutely necessary but not something to talk about much. Rural life was to some degree saved by the classicists' revival of ancient Roman praise of country life, but this was centered on the rich man's villa and not the peasant village. For rural folk, life was lived season to season, and cities were seductive but dangerous places.

The English word peasant does not really capture what *contadino* meant to an Italian. The *contado* was the region outside of a city that was politically controlled and largely owned by the urban elite. At a greater distance was the rural *distretto* or district. It is fair to say that most *contadini* were probably agricultural workers of some kind, but there were herders, blacksmiths, carters, loggers,

fishermen, carpenters, village priests, millers, healers, craftspeople, officials, miners, and a host of others whose residence was in rural villages but who did not till the soil. Among farmers, some owned their land, others leased what they worked from landlords, still others were sharecroppers with *mezzadria* contracts, and many were simply laborers. In a given village a household could be engaged in several income-producing activities. A miller might own land on which his family worked as needed; his wife and older daughters could take in piece-work through the putting-out system of manufacture; his lactating wife might render service as a wet nurse to urban families; and he might have a talent for wood carving or masonry and work on the local villa. After several successful years they could buy more land or a finer house and hire labor.

There was actually quite an active market for land during the Renaissance era, though this differed by region. In Sicily, half the population lived under manorialism that supported a feudal hierarchy. Eighty percent of Neapolitan land was controlled by feudal lords, though this was a crumbling system undermined by rising towns. After the Black Death, larger land owners in the north, including bishops and monasteries, sold off land for which they could no longer find labor to work. Noble families already owned much, townspeople bought more, but so did the well-off *contadini*. By 1500 urban Florentines owned 50% of their contado and Cremona's citizens 57%, but the remainder was in the hands of the Church or rural families. In the south, landlords depopulated large tracts as they enclosed them for sheep grazing. Wars and plague had their effects, as families disappeared or moved off the land. The village of Montalbuccio near Siena had nine households in 1410, but only two in 1500.

Of course, non-Church held land was taxed, and owners had to be able to pay. Those who could not because of war, poor weather, or family crisis might be forced to sell and become renters. One solution was credit. In some ways, rural life was run on credit. Under *mezzadria*, farmer-renters received use of the land, seed, and other necessities that were advanced by the owner against half (*mezzo*) of the future crop. Others needed credit advanced in cash or goods from landlords or outsiders, generally provided against collateral. Cash or credit was also needed for many goods a family had to purchase, from boots to nails. Even in good years, rural families were often in debt for months at a time.

Villages near cities often had very positive relations with their urban neighbors and landlords. *Contadini* brought building materials such as lumber and bricks, firewood, garden produce, rent money and in-kind payments, and milled flour through city gates on a daily basis. In the *distretto*, villages and villagers were largely left to their own devices. Some of these villages were walled, as the *casali* of the Roman countryside that contained groups of families of farmers or herders, each in its own home.

Some villages had their own parish church, but many were simply too small to support one. Priests travelled among villages, leaving religious life largely in the hands of rural confraternities, or religious brotherhoods. Compared with cities, there was a very low level of literacy, especially among renters and laborers. But then, there was not a great deal to read. Priests and notaries might teach the promising student, but in the *distretti* these were in short supply. Villagers' lives centered on their families, and they marked major milestones within them, sharing good fortune or grief with their neighbors. Newborns were baptized (often at a distant *pieve*, or large rural or town church); brides were dowered and weddings celebrated; the dead were mourned and buried. Religious holidays broke up daily tedium with processions and other festivities. Many villages ran their own local affairs through elected councils or assemblies of landowners. These divided up taxes and shares of communal grazing and water rights, and adjudicated disputes among villagers.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Construction, Building; Manufacturing; Mezzadria; Putting-Out System; Taxes and Public Finance; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Families, Laboring Class; Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing; Servants, Household; *Food and Drink*: Diet and Social Status; *Politics and Warfare*: Contado and Subject Towns; Rebellions and Revolts; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; *Science and Technology*: Agriculture and Agronomy

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VILLAS

The early Renaissance-era villa in northern and central Italy consisted of a single owner's or his family's productive farm land, the villages of those who worked it,

both kitchen and small pleasure gardens, and the *casa di signore*, or lord's house. Old feudal families with strong ties to the countryside proudly retained their properties, and dispossessed nobles and wealthy city-dwellers pieced together large landholdings, sometimes over generations. Villas were first of all economic resources on which were grown grain, grapes, fruits and vegetables, edible and working animals, timber, and a host of other products that could be sold for profit. They also produced food and other goods that supported the landlord's family. During the mid- and later sixteenth century truly wealthy families, including Italy's rulers, spent lavishly to create rural palaces, often enhanced by extensive gardens. For dukes and cardinals the villa's economic purposes paled beside the ability of architecture and awe-inspiring landscapes to project their status, power, and authority.

Before 1500 possession of a villa was a sign of either old lineage or new wealth. In 1427 the vast Florentine Strozzi family had 22 branches that owned villas, most acquired during the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. By 1480 they had had to sell eight because of male members' exile by the Medici. By the 1490s the Medici had four villas around Florence: Careggi, Fiesole, Caffagiolo, and Trebbia. Beside major crops, Tuscan villa lands provided useable or saleable materials such as sand for mortar or glassmaking; clay for bricks and tiles; timber for construction and firewood; manure for fertilizer; flax for linen making; and fish and fowl for the market or landlord's table. A villa might include facilities for wine-making, a lime and brick kiln, a threshing floor, mill, forge, and stables. In and around Rome most fifteenth-century property owners also held a *vigna*, or vineyard, often with a summer residence. Old noble families such as the Orsini or Colonna held much of this land, and these holdings would later be extended and transformed into classicizing villa structures and vast pleasure gardens. Between the eleventh and late fourteenth centuries the Veneto hosted a mere 22 villas; as Venice extended its authority over the region this jumped to 84 by 1500. Already by 1400 Villa Sarega near Verona had a lavish *casa*, fountains, many farm buildings and villages, and its own church.

Medieval romances and Classical works of philosophy and architecture, as well as contemporary humanists, popularized the notion that truly civilized life had to be lived away from the city. In his *Decameron* Boccaccio had famously written of a comfortable and well-stocked villa as refuge from plague in 1348, and indeed many did flee to their villas when it repeatedly reappeared. *Villeggiatura* came to mean withdrawal to one's countryside villa: whether to direct workers, rest from business, escape disease, or enjoy a banquet.

War upset much of northern Italy's countryside during the early 1500s, but it swiftly recovered. In 1559 a Milanese author on country life listed 200 villas in Lombardy, and during the sixteenth century Venetians raised their villa population from 88 to 257. In the 1550s Villa Pisani in Bagnolo spread across 460 acres, but

others were still larger. Popes, whose families generally had estates of their own, built in or around the Vatican. Its Villa Belvedere, Rome's first Renaissance villa (1484–1492), was developed as a summer retreat, as was the Palazzo San Marco (now Venezia) by Popes Paul II and III. Pius IV built the Casino (Little House) on Vatican grounds, and Julius III had Villa Giulia constructed near Rome's northern gate as a summer retreat and an elegant guest house for important visitors who waited there for their formal entrance ceremony. Villa Giulia benefitted from the efforts of no less than sculptor Bartolommeo Ammanati, architect Giacomo Vignola, painter Giorgio Vasari, and Michelangelo. Popes often left Rome during the hot and sticky summers, but generally stayed in new or underconstruction villas of their cardinals. Cardinal Farnese built Caprarola, a pentagonal fortress that Vignola spent 17 years transforming into a palace with intricate and impressive gardens and a football field-long stable for 60 horses. At Tivoli Cardinal Este built a fine villa *casa* on the site of an old Franciscan convent. Here, too, the grounds easily matched the buildings for sumptuousness. They included extensive waterworks, including a water organ and the Alley of 100 Fountains. Back in Lombardy, Ferrara's ruling Este family built several fancy summer residences that also featured carefully crafted gardens and hunting parks. Duke Alfonso I constructed on an island in the Po River the Villa Belvedere, which boasted baths, towers, a grotto beneath a fake mountain, groves, meadows, fountains: a tour de force of villa elements. In the Veneto from the 1530s the architect Palladio built a series of classicizing villa *case* that he then popularized in his *Four Books of Architecture*. One, Villa Rotondo, directly inspired Thomas Jefferson's Monticello.

Inside, an elite villa *casa's* walls were often decorated with extensive frescoes reflecting natural, historical, family, or mythological themes, most famously perhaps Raphael's in the Farnesina Loggia. Unlike an urban palazzo, a rural *casa* was designed for pleasure and entertainment: feasting, dancing, music, plays, games, gambling, relaxing, study, and good conversation. Though it might boast a fine library or an owner's collection of antiquities or oddities, as did historian Paolo di Giovio's on Lake Como, it was probably sparsely furnished, with guest rooms (beds, chests, and benches), trestle tables and chairs for dining, and a well-equipped kitchen. Even in the heyday of grand villas, however, most *case* were far simpler affairs, more utilitarian than impressive.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Courtly; Ceramics, Decorative; Dance, Courtly; Music at Court; Painting: Media and Techniques; Portraits; Sculpture; Theater for the Elite; Women Poets and Their Poetry; *Economics and Work:* Construction, Building; Slaves and Slavery; *Family and Gender:* Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; Servants, Household; *Food and Drink:* Conduct at Table; Diet and Social Status; Feasting and Fasting; Fruits and Vegetables; Grains and the Wheat Market; Meat,

Fowl, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy; Sugar and Confectioned Sweets; Wines; *Housing and Community*: Gardens; Plague; *Politics and Warfare*: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Transportation, Local; Water; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Sports, Contests, and Competitions; Gambling; Games and Pastimes; Noble Pursuits; Weddings; *Religion and Beliefs*: Christian Art in the Home; *Science and Technology*: Academies; Agriculture and Agronomy; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Collecting and Collections; Libraries; Machines and Engines

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VIOLENCE WITHIN THE HOUSEHOLD AND COMMUNITY

Life was not for the cowardly. Violence was omnipresent in Renaissance-era society, rural and urban. Within families husbands and wives argued and came to blows; parents committed infanticide; adults beat children, servants, and slaves to discipline them; males raped women and girls (in a study of Florence, one-third of females reportedly raped were between 6 and 12); spouses killed mates' lovers and their mates for good measure; masters beat apprentices and apprentices retaliated. In the streets gamblers pummeled cheaters; soldiers bullied civilians; nobles dueled; johns beat prostitutes and were beaten in turn by their pimps; pimps could legally be roughed up but not killed; gangs clashed with rivals, brandishing knives and hurling rocks; paid assassins stalked and slaughtered their prey; muggers assaulted their victims and police manhandled suspects. In rural areas vagabonds were waylaid and themselves attacked others; roving troops of unemployed mercenaries or soldiers had their ways with entire villages; bandits robbed the rich and kept the goods; frustrated peasants damaged tools, buildings, animals, and even the landlord and his family. Alcohol played its part, as did frustration and stress,

poverty, boredom, wounded honor, desperation, retribution, vendetta, and sheer machismo.

As today, much violence was between people who knew each other, including family members, coworkers, neighbors; and much violence went unreported and thus unrecorded. This was especially true of lower-class people, who had little to gain. Reported violence often involved people of the same social class, and unmarried young men were usually victims, attackers, or both. In the case of rape an aggrieved family might simply mete out justice of their own if the perpetrator was known to them. Courts often had rapists marry their victims, especially if it was clear the victim had become pregnant. Penalties could go as high as death, which was rarely imposed unless the crime was aggravated by serious harm to or death of the victim, the victim was a nun or child, or a venereal disease had been passed on. In later sixteenth-century Florence, fines for rape ranged from 1,000 lire for violating a nun; 300 lire for a virgin or widow; and a mere 25 lire for a servant. Venice distinguished five degrees of rape victim: a girl to age 12; a woman unmarried but able to bear children; a married woman; a widow, and a nun. A girl's attacker would be fined, forced to provide a dowry, and jailed or banished. Courts had more trouble disproving fornication or adultery with older women, whether married or not.

Organized banditry was known in the Veneto, Tuscany, and especially the rural south. Genuine bandits had been convicted of serious crimes in absentia and therefore banned from village or city. Considered outside the law, these men gathered together with runaway peasants, slaves, or military deserters. They prized their independence, supporting themselves by stealing, robbing, smuggling, doing odd jobs, and living off family members. Some groups served local lords as enforcers or general-purpose thugs; in the Veneto the state forgave a bandit if he killed another with a greater or equal price on his head.

Organized urban violence included scheduled traditional street fights between young men of two neighborhoods or quarters. Scores of fighters threw stones, fought with sticks, or used their bare fists as they sought to humble their opponents or capture a Venetian bridge. Such a safety valve may have let locals blow off steam, but violence remained the major reason for arrest in Italian cities. A study of arrests in 1350 and 1450 in Savona, Bologna, and Lucca reveals that violence was the main reason. In Lucca and Bologna two-thirds of arrests in 1450 were for assaults or other violence. In Mantua in 1432 half of all arrests were for violent acts. The city of Cesena had designated penalties for over 12 specific non-weapon-related injuries, including punching, kicking, biting, pulling hair, and slapping the face. The time (night or festival), place (church, market, bridge), and the victim's status (policeman, city official, noble) could be further aggravating circumstances.

The circumstances surrounding a homicide also played a huge role in determining a killer's fate. It might have been merely an accident; or an act committed while in a state of rage or drunkenness; or self-defense; or a matter of honor; or a secret, premeditated act; a premeditated act of revenge; or the act of a paid assassin. In Venice, murder attending a robbery was considered the vilest act, breaking, as it did, two social taboos.

Youthful males were a constant source of violence in cities such as Florence. The guilty included noble sons, apprentices, students, orphans, foundlings, and beggars. Some activity was playful, such as extracting "tolls" from passing women or merchants in the city's narrow streets. The equivalent of "flash mobs" harassed police trying to make arrests, allowing the culprit to escape. Gangs tussled with each other, often resulting in collateral damage to people and property. Some gangs saw themselves as agents of retribution against wrongdoers who escaped formal punishment. Preachers such as Savonarola and politicians such as the Medici in Florence harnessed youthful vigor to hassle the sinful or opponents. Sixteenth-century governments shut much of this down, and the advent of Tridentine Christian Doctrine schools took away much ill-spent free time.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Apprentices; *Family and Gender:* Childhood; Education of Children; Families, Laboring Class; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and *Piazze*; Jewish Communities; *Politics and Warfare:* Civic Magistracies and Offices; Crime and Punishments; Rebellions and Revolts; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Drunkenness; Gambling; Sports, Contests, and Competitions; Street Entertainment; *Religion and Beliefs:* Preachers and Preaching

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WATER

Fresh water is necessary for human life. What follows is an outline of the place of water in Renaissance-era Italian society, culture, technology, religion, and recreation.

Households required water for drinking, washing, cooking, and irrigating gardens. The wealthy might have a well in their courtyard, or rainwater cisterns, or tap into an aqueduct's water distribution network of pipes. Servants or slaves drew drinking water from civic fountains to take home, and barrel-toting water-carriers delivered it for a fee. The lower classes did the heavy-lifting themselves. They were lucky to have fresh, potable water, and usually had to draw from communal wells, fountains, or local streams. Rivers and lakes supplied ample water, though upstream and local pollution reduced its quality.

These bodies did, however, provide fish, waterfowl, and other forms of food; and livestock were happy to drink from their shores. Alpine drainage fed navigable northern Italian rivers, lakes, and canals that provided networks for waterborne travel and transportation. Some cities relied on watercourses for military protection, and deeper bodies hosted naval engagements. Venice's history, economy, and culture centered on its lagoon and the navy and commerce that reached out beyond it. Its canals both divided and joined the many islands and, like most Italian rivers, served as an open sewer.

Italy's arid northeast and much of the south required carefully planned and maintained irrigation for the growth of any level of commercial crops. Along slower-moving rivers malarial swampland, including Rome's Campus Martius, needed draining and building up to dry out the mosquito breeding grounds and prevent flooding and erosion. Cities such as Pisa and Ravenna lost their port status as their rivers silted up and coastlines drew ever further away from old city centers. Violent river floods periodically swamped cities such as Florence and Rome. The Tiber flooded in 1495, 1514, 1557, 1563, 1589, and 1598. In 1530 a major inundation saw water hit the 19-meter mark on the official gauge.

When tame, Italy's riversides were dotted with water-powered mills, fishermen, and laundresses, and butchers and others disposing of waste. Paper-making and wool processing were filthy and required huge amounts of water, the rights to which cities were happy to lease. Ferryman scurried people and goods from bank to bank. Barges towed upriver by water buffalo docked at wharves backed by warehouses and manned by stevedores. At great ports such as Messina, Palermo, Genoa, Venice, Naples, Bari, and Livorno the Mediterranean washed up goods and people from three continents, and later five. Like capillaries, rivers drew cargoes up as far as they could, at which point they were dispersed to alpine caravans and Apennine carters.

Water also provided Italians with a range of diversions. In cities such as Rome, Florence, Siena, and Perugia fountains produced ongoing displays. In summer, cooling breeze-blown mists freshened the air and the splash of water on water or marble provided a bass drone against human and animal traffic and noise. In the gardens of dukes and cardinals carefully laid-out water courses amazed and sometimes drenched visitors. Swimming provided another way to cool off during the summer. Immersing the body, however, was believed to open pores to the poisoned air that caused diseases such as malaria and plague, which is the main reason bathing was uncommon. The swimmers whom our few sources mention, however, seem not to have been concerned. While all classes “washed up” with whatever soap and water was available—and commercial soap was available throughout the Renaissance era—a relaxing soak was generally taboo. Most public bathhouses had been closed due to plague, and those that remained, often in areas with German populations, were closed after syphilis’ appearance in the 1490s.

What remained, however, were natural warm springs whose mineral waters were (and often are) believed to provide therapeutic relief. Spas had catered to the ancient Romans and a handful remained through the Middle Ages, including Porcetta near Bologna and Abano near Padua. Dante complained about the accommodations and service of the waters near Viterbo. By 1500 hundreds had popped up, vying with each other for customers. They featured music, food, wine, massage, gambling, and sex. They welcomed rich and poor; men, women, lepers, and animals were placed in separate pools. Entrepreneurs and physicians distinguished waters that were sulfurous, aluminous, bituminous, alkaline, and calcinous, linking each to the treatment of some ailment or set of them. Caldiero near Verona claimed drinking its water remedied 78 conditions from melancholy to ulcers. Some of the wealthy even had barrels of the stuff shipped home. As with any medical matter, taking the waters involved astrology and timing one’s visit for maximum effect. Many facilities also featured physicians or surgeons who therapeutically bled and otherwise purged people, while preaching the Galenic gospel of rest, exercise, and good diet.

Finally, for spiritual health the Catholic Church utilized water ritually. Priests used blessed water in baptism, during which it was poured over the infant’s head as part of the rite of exorcism and initiation. Blessed or holy water from a basin was also applied ritually by congregants upon entering a church, and sprinkled by the priest during certain liturgies to bless the congregation.

See also: Arts: Sculpture; Economics and Work: Construction, Building; Manufacturing; Trade, Seaborne; Family and Gender: Health and Illness; Fashion and Appearance: Bathing and Personal Hygiene; Laundry; Food and Drink: Civic Fountains and Potable Water; Housing and Community: Gardens; Sewage,

Sewerage, and Public Sanitation; Transportation, Local; *Politics and Warfare*: Navies and Naval Warfare; *Religion and Beliefs*: Sacramentals; Sacraments, Catholic; *Science and Technology*: Agriculture and Agronomy; Ships and Shipbuilding

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POLITICS AND WARFARE



INTRODUCTION

A glance at a map of Renaissance-era Italy in, say, 1500 reveals a patchwork of small states in the north and center, and the kingdoms of Naples and of Sicily in the south. Across the center, like a drooping belt, lay the Papal States, including territories the popes actually controlled and those to which they laid claim (to the northeast). If one had a very accurate map for each of the first years of each decade from 1350 to 1600, one would see the boundaries of the northern third of the peninsula constantly changing as states grew and shrank and cities were absorbed into neighbors' territories. Labels of political states also changed: lordship to marquissate to duchy and republic to duchy to grand duchy.

What lay behind this shape-shifting were international politics and war, and both of these were driven by different forces within the Italian states. Whether the Papal States were in turmoil or at peace was a matter of the personality differences between aggressive popes such as Alexander VI or Julius II, and the scholarly and pacifistic Adrian II. It could also depend on the diplomatic skills of Clement VII, whose reign saw Rome sacked (1527) by German troops of the Catholic soon-to-be-crowned emperor. Some men create turmoil, while others have it thrust upon them. The sheer number of more or less independent Italian political entities makes broad-stroke analysis difficult. When Naples, Venice, Milan, and Florence signed the papacy-sponsored Peace of Lodi in 1454, nearly four dozen other signatories joined in as "friends" of the larger powers.

Within states, too, competition raged for scarce resources such as public offices and the ability to crush one's enemies. Many of these states fell to military lords who used the siren song of peace and stability to gain authority. Others, such as Florence, Pisa, Siena, and Genoa, lurched from independence to subservience and



In 1505 Florence's army routed Pisa's at the Tower of San Vincenzo. Around 1570 Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574) celebrated the Battle of Torre San Vincenzo with a fresco in the Hall of the 500 in Florence's Palazzo Vecchio. Typical of its day, the work is stylized and romanticized, with little of the filth and suffering that warfare really brought. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

back over the era's 250 years. Lordships and monarchies developed efficient and effective government organs that kept the peace and protected the regime. Republics experimented, too, above all attempting to maintain the power of the current oligarchy and to restrict opportunities for power to fall into the wrong hands. Whether ruled by lords, oligarchs, or relatively popular governments, across the era states evolved broader and broader authority to intervene in the lives of common folk. Definitions of criminality expanded, police became more effective, and concern for public health and safety led to more powerful magistracies and tighter restrictions on medical practitioners and products. Cityscapes changed with more palazzi and villas built by ruling dynasties, cardinals, and merchant-bankers. They also changed as warfare did. In the face of more and better artillery, quaint crenellated city and castle walls gave way to massive earthworks that hugged the ground like stranded starfish.

From the later phases of the Roman Empire, military campaigns wracked the peninsula. War was not just diplomacy by other means, but a way of life. Florentine and Venetian merchants were no less prepared to use war as a tool against competitors than professional mercenary captains. The mental image of old Pope Julius II in armor is every bit as disturbing as the painting of Duke Federico da Montefeltro of Urbino clad in his armor but sitting at his desk reading a very large—and one

hopes good—book. The age opened with light naval galleys sparring with others, a broadside of crossbow bolts seeking human targets. By the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, huge Venetian galleasses armed with 20 or more cannon formed the backbone of the Holy League’s fleet opposing the Turks’. On the battlefield, too, firearms and artillery slowly proved their worth as armies grew in size, organization, and the ability to wreak havoc.

Sources for studying Renaissance-era politics and warfare fall into several distinct categories. First would come histories written during the period, often by participants in the events they describe. Perhaps the most famous are the historical works by Florentines Niccolò Machiavelli and Francesco Guicciardini, which have been translated into English. Second would be personal observations contained in diaries, letters, advice books, and memoirs. Third come official reports from diplomats, military leaders, and spies to popes, dukes, the Venetian government, the Neapolitan viceroys, and other rulers. Both these and personal records are biased and therefore present issues for those using them. Personal records, however, presumably reflect an individual’s unvarnished thoughts and feelings, and official verbal pictures were painted by professional observers whose accuracy was counted on by their masters.

Fourth are the laws themselves that governing bodies passed, for which we sometimes have the actual debates leading to passage, as is the case with Florence’s *consulte e pratiche*. Fifth would be judicial records, especially those trying public officials for corruption or malfeasance. They also shed light on police procedures and activity, rules of evidence, and actual sentencing as opposed to the ideals expressed in legislation. Sixth would include taxation and public expenditure records that help explain the flow of resources within a state. Accounts for amounts expended for specific emergencies, such as plague, war, or famine, shed light on government priorities and the burden such events placed on the public fisc. Again, narratives outlining the decision-making processes and the necessary compromises reached can be especially interesting to historians.

Seventh and related are financial records from noble courts, the Vatican, and Naples’s and Sicily’s royal and viceregal courts. Sums could be gargantuan, such as the 100,000 florins paid by the Visconti to the emperor for the title Duke of Milan. Building and decorating costs at palazzi and villas, clothing expenses, and amounts spent on balls, feasts, festivals, and other displays of “magnificence” could also reach great heights, underlining their importance to diplomacy and the credibility and even legitimacy of a dynasty or regime. Finally, of interest to those dealing with political theory are the many texts written by humanists, philosophers, historians, and others that treat war and politics theoretically. There is a clear trajectory from early Renaissance-era optimism and idealism to sixteenth-century realism and cynicism, as exemplified by Machiavelli’s *The Prince*.

ALLIANCES AND TREATIES

With a dozen or so regionally important states and city-states, fewer by the late sixteenth century, Renaissance-era Italy was a patchwork of political entities. Over the course of 250 years smaller city-states were swallowed up by stronger ones, and later were lost in conquest or treaty to new masters. In succumbing, they lost the ability to carry out their own foreign policy and had to trust the dominant city to be prudent and realistic. Often this was not the case. When most of Italy and much of Europe turned on Venice in 1509, its many subject cities abandoned the Republic and sought protection of the emperor, Venice's enemy. Whether small or powerful, Italy's states always played a dangerous game in aligning themselves with or against one another, especially if one of Europe's major powers was involved. Sometimes, however, it was worse not to have allies.

By 1378, Genoa and Venice had fought three naval wars for colonies and commercial dominance in the Black Sea and eastern Mediterranean. The fourth, begun in 1378, reached a climax in the sea Battle of Chioggia in 1380, and was ended with the Peace of Turin in 1381. Genoa was not supposed to lose, but it did. It had gathered a group of allies that literally surrounded Venice: the lordship of Padua, the Kingdom of Hungary, and the Austrian Habsburgs. Venice had yet to expand on the mainland, so land forces literally pounded on its doors. Venice won, but was weakened, and Genoa was spent as a naval power. There would be no fifth war. Genoa immediately suffered a series of weak leaders, including Antoniotto Adorno, who was elected doge for life four times. From 1394 to 1409 neighboring France dominated the city. Padua had hoped to dominate Venice, but failed; Hungary, however, gained what it wanted from Venice in Dalmatia, and the Habsburgs in Treviso and Trieste. In this case, it paid even to be on the losing side. For its part, Venice almost fell prey to Padua again in the 1390s, but allied itself with Giangaleazzo Visconti of Milan, captured Padua, and executed its leaders.

Expansionist Milan then took over in Padua as well as nearby Vicenza and Verona, and lorded over Perugia, as well as Pisa and Siena, ancient enemies of Florence. During what should have been a conquest of Florence, Giangaleazzo Visconti suddenly died (1402). The campaign collapsed, though Florence had been virtually surrounded with no effective allies and rebellious subjects. Visconti had sought the blessing of the French, lest they attack Milan from Genoa. He had reason to expect favor, since he had married his daughter, Valentina, to the French prince, Louis of Orleans. They refused support, so Visconti went to the emperor, who granted him the title Duke of Milan in exchange for 100,000 florins. But, like his adversary Florence, Visconti had no effective allies. When he died, his empire disintegrated. Siena became free again, Pisa fell to Florence's wrath, and between 1404 and 1406 Venice picked off Padua, Vicenza, and Verona, which became the

core of the Venetian mainland empire, the *Terraferma*. Sometimes, even with a grand title, having allies mattered.

During the first half of the fifteenth century, alignments shifted as states looked after their own best interests. Milan reestablished itself, Venice expanded further, condottieri running Ferrara and Mantua sold their services, and Medici Florence bankrolled the players. In 1453, however, Francesco Sforza had just established himself as Milan's new dynastic duke, and, with Florence, he feared further Venetian growth. The papacy had become revitalized in Rome and sought to become a peacemaker, and Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks. The time was ripe for a grand scheme. Ottoman successes led to a peace treaty with Venice. Milan's new alliance with France threatened Venice, so Milan and Venice accepted papal negotiation and signed the Peace of Lodi in 1454. Within months, Pope Nicholas V and Cosimo de' Medici joined Venice and Milan, as did Naples somewhat later, forming the Italian League against the Turks and any French incursions. It was to last 25 years. These principals pledged mutual support against attack and each a minimum armed force during peace and war. Some four dozen smaller states lined up as "friends" or "adherents" of the larger states seeking peace and protection in their shadows. The result is what modern diplomats might call spheres of influence laid out on the Italian map.

When in 1494 France's Charles VIII sought to press his dynasty's claims to Milan and Naples, he completely upset the balance of power that Italian diplomats had sustained for four decades. His invasion and capture of Naples was short-lived. Though crowned king, he retreated north through the peninsula dogged by the forces of a revitalized Italian League. This now lacked French ally Florence, but included the big dogs of Spain and the Empire: Naples was Spanish, after all, and northern Italy was Imperial territory. Three aggressive monarchs now set their sights on Italian property. When Charles's successor Louis XII took Milan in 1499, the so-called Italian Wars started in earnest and arguably did not end until France and the Empire signed the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559. These conflicts present a kaleidoscope of shifting alliances and treaties made and broken.

The effects of the political calculations and whims of the ruling or governing elites on the daily lives of the populace could be devastating. As with most wars, the soldiers and civilians who were swept up in conflicts fought, bled, died, and were victimized regardless of whether their masters won or lost, which dynasty they supported, or whose mercenaries they faced.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Trade, Seaborne; *Politics and Warfare*: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Mercenaries; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; Navies and Naval Warfare; Rebellions and Revolts; Republics; War and Civilians; War in Italy, 1494–1559; War in Italy to 1494

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AMBASSADORS AND DIPLOMACY

The Renaissance era had many names for the men who represented their states at the courts or city halls of other states: legates, nuncios, envoys, diplomats, emissaries, ambassadors. These representatives negotiated everything from release of prisoners to trade agreements and marriages, carried messages between rulers or ruling bodies, spied and gathered intelligence, and counterbalanced the presence of competing powers at court. Nobles, trustworthy merchants who knew the local customs and dialect, clerics, and even scholars made up early embassies between Italian states. The sender needed to weigh several considerations: would the group do what the senders desired? Would it honor both the sender and receiver? How much freedom of action should they have? On what issues might they negotiate and from which were they to refrain? Might they sign agreements on behalf of their home government?

Fourteenth-century Italian states had no permanent diplomatic personnel or channels, and embassies were usually sent and received to deal with quite specific matters. Complex issues often took a good deal of time since envoys had to seek instructions from home as negotiations unfolded. They also sent back status reports, which informed leaders of progress or its lack. In Venice these were rarely preserved until its government began collecting them around 1490, about the time that Venetian Ermolao Barbaro penned the first book for diplomats, *On the Duties of the Legate*, a rather Machiavellian manual. At first only the final summary report, or *relazione*, was filed. These were often very informative, if brutally frank, and served as guides for future diplomats. Florence often dealt with nearby city-states such as Pisa, Siena, Lucca, Venice, and Milan concerning war, trade, and citizen privileges. Florence's earliest use of

a portfolio, a charge that clearly outlined the responsibilities and authority of its diplomats, was recorded for a mission to Milan in 1384; its earliest record of a *relazione* was a decade later. Between 1415 and 1458 only the Florentine Signoria (executive council) could send or receive ambassadors, and *relazioni* had to be registered with the chancery. Only the ad hoc committee for war, the Dieci di Balìa, also had the authority to send envoys. From 1458 the new Florentine Council of 100, dominated by the Medici, had control over diplomacy and foreign affairs. Popes preferred to maintain flexible foreign relations, and the tenor of these often changed dramatically with each election. The cardinals from Naples and the northern city-states often served as go-betweens, as did other bishops and humanist scholars. Clergy had an advantage as they also could exercise leverage over the local church, something no layman could legitimately do.

A turning point in Italian relations occurred with the Peace of Lodi in 1454, a year after the Turkish conquest of Constantinople. The northern powers of Venice, Milan, and Florence hammered out its 15 articles and signed it in August; Pope Nicholas V blessed it in November; and on the following January 26 Naples's King Alfonso ratified it. The Peace was directly followed by formation of the Italic League, which was to include no one else except the inferior allies—satellites—of the five principal signatories. This acknowledged that each had a recognized sphere of influence, and kept out the powers of Aragon, France, the Empire, and conceivably even the Turks. It implied that all of Italy was divided among the big five, established permanent embassies among the five powers, and required that each create and maintain a standing army. This last was to ensure that each could contribute to a joint military mission, and to serve as a deterrent to aggression by other parties. This alone moved the states away from reliance on ad hoc militias or total dependence on mercenaries.

The League's permanent embassies were a recognition among the states that each was sovereign, a position Florence formally claimed in 1466. The republics of Florence and Venice elected their ambassadors. The rulers of Milan, the Papal States, and the Neapolitan Kingdom sent whomever they wished for as long as they wished with whatever powers they deemed appropriate. They were far more comfortable dealing with fellow rulers on the basis of *signore* to *signore* rather than with assemblies, councils, or revolving magistracies. Venice's doge provided this stability, as did Lorenzo de' Medici in Florence after his consolidation of power in 1480. Though the 30 years after Lodi is sometimes characterized as a period of peninsular peace, it was not. Milan lorded over Genoa; Milan and Venice sparred over Venetian expansion; and Naples and Rome fought with Lorenzo de' Medici and the Florentines.

The Ambassador's Gift

“In 1488 a giraffe was presented from the Sultan of Babylon to Lorenzo de’Medici; brought by an ambassador, a man of high position and a great lord of that country. . . . The giraffe was seven meters high, with feet like an ox; it was a gentle beast and one of the Turks led it about; it was shown in the country round and in many convents. Lorenzo put it in the pope’s [Florentine] stables in Via della Scala, and in winter it had a bed of deep straw and a fire was often kindled near, as it dreaded the cold. It ate of everything, and when it could would put its head into the baskets of peasants; it took apples from the hand of a child, so tame was it.”

*Source: “Ricordanze of Tribaldo de’Rossi.” In Janet Ross, ed. *Florentine Palaces and Their Stories*. London: J.M. Dent, 1905, pp. 343–44.*

Another turning point was the French invasion of Italy in 1494. For the next 20 years Italian states had to play the Aragonese, French, and Imperial interests off of their own; after Charles Habsburg inherited both Spain and the Empire (crowned emperor in 1530) and Francis I Valois became French king, it was the Habsburgs and Valois. And, of course, there were the Turks. Alliances shifted among Italian states and foreign powers in kaleidoscopic fashion, as allies became enemies and then friends and allies again. Though battles often took the place of negotiations in shaping the temporary truces and treaties, negotiations created the dueling alliances that took to the field and then hammered out the consequences. Small states such as Mantua, Ferrara, and Lucca maintained their independence by extremely adroit dealings with both fellow Italians and the foreign powers. They also carefully chose their allies and even their diplomats: the Gonzaga of Mantua used Baldassare Castiglione, of *The Courtier* fame, and Ferrara the poet Ariosto. The sixteenth century also saw the evolution of court ceremonial and magnificence when receiving ambassadors: processions, spectacles, and feasts greeted the foreigners. This was especially true of non-Italian diplomats and particularly when members of the ruling families accompanied the embassies.

See also: *Arts:* Non-Europeans in Art; Portraits; *Economics and Work:* Imported Goods, Sources of; Trade, Seaborne; *Fashion and Appearance:* Art, Fashion in; *Food and Drink:* Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community:* Foreign Communities; *Politics and Warfare:* Alliances and Treaties; Mercenaries; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; Republics; Urban Councils and Assemblies; War in Italy, 1494–1559; War in Italy to 1494; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Civic

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ARMIES

From 1350 to the mid-1500s several types of armies campaigned in Italy. Down to about 1410 traditional urban militias and small feudal forces faced companies of marauding professional soldiers from northern Europe and Catalonia. Several of these foreign groups became mercenary, paid by and serving for one or another side in Italy’s many internal squabbles. Italian mercenaries (condottieri) replaced the foreigners after 1420 or so, helping Milanese, Florentine, Papal, and Venetian armies carve out and defend territorial states. From 1494 to 1559 these were swamped by French, Imperial, and Spanish national armies aided by professional Swiss and German mercenaries.

The fourteenth-century urban militia (*societas armorum*) theoretically consisted of all taxpaying citizens. The wealthiest who had horses served as cavalry, others as armed (usually with spears) and armored infantry, the poorer as archers and crossbowmen, and the poorest in support jobs. Typically ten infantry served with each knight, though in 1351 Milan fielded 7,000 cavalry and 6,000 infantry. Militias were organized by city neighborhoods or quarters, and laws dictated training, leadership, and length of annual service owed (*servitia debita*). In Tuscany it

was typically 15 or 20 to 50 or 60 days. Venice required all males aged 17 to 60 trained in the crossbow, and in 1338 could field an estimated 30,000 men. Armies went on campaign accompanied by barber-surgeons, smiths, clergy, musicians, and the city's *carroccio*, a symbolic heavy, four-wheeled cart that flew patriotic banners and supported an altar for Mass before battle.

Fourteenth-century English, German, and Catalan companies, often between campaigns in war-torn France, descended into Italy and created havoc. They savaged the countryside and extorted huge sums from cities they threatened. Some civic authorities hired them to fight alongside their militias. They were paid by the "*lanza*," a squad consisting of five to eight men including a cavalryman, squire, men-at-arms (infantry), and archer. In 1513 Nicolò Machiavelli wrote of their unreliability, which was no news to Pisans whose hired Germans had fled before Florentine crossbows at Cascina 150 years earlier. Though Italians fought with mercenary companies, they were essentially foreign units that brutalized and pillaged locals whenever possible: loot was an expected bonus to regular pay.

Both urban militias and foreign mercenaries disappeared for much of the fifteenth century. Paid professionals replaced the noble knights and part-time infantry. Mercenaries remained, but in trained units led by local Italian lords or want-to-be lords who served as the *condottiero* or contractor. Firearms began to replace bows, heavy cavalry became more vulnerable and declined in use, and artillery played a larger role on the battlefield. Venice, Milan, Florence, Naples, and the Papal States emerged as the peninsula's major players, and the Peace of Lodi (1454) required that each retain a standing army. When they did fight, a typical army of cavalry, gunners, archers, infantry, and a few cannon numbered around 10,000 men. All of this had to be funded now, since no city could rely on the old *servitia*: war was now clearly a business. Despite Machiavelli's famous claim that fifteenth-century conflicts were bloodless, 900 men fell at Anghiari (1440) and 1,200 at Campomorto (1482). These casualties were light, however, when compared with death toll of 16,000 plus at Marignano in 1515, which pitted the French, Germans, and Venetians against an army of Swiss pikemen.

From 1494 to 1559 warfare in Italy centered largely on national armies of France, the Empire, and Spain. These in turn were augmented by Swiss and German mercenaries and the smaller and less effective forces of local Italian allies. The armies of the Habsburgs and Valois were large and still largely feudal, composed of mixed arms: cavalry, infantry, gunners, and artillery. Swiss mercenary captains specialized in fielding large blocks of well-drilled pikemen, while German Landsknecht mercenaries, who often fought against them, did so with long swords and later pikes and arquebuses. Though the French continued to rely on heavily armored knights as shock troops, Habsburg forces and Venice increasingly used lighter cavalry that emphasized fast movement, and firearms such as the wheel-lock pistol. Stradioti were light cavalry from the Balkans, often used by Venice

from 1482, who fought with recurve bows and spears and wore little in the way of body armor. Spain and thus Naples employed light cavalry modeled on the Berber horsemen of North Africa. At Fornovo in 1495 armies were about half infantry to half cavalry; by Pavia in 1525 the ratio was 6:1 infantry over cavalry. Firearms, artillery, and massed pike formations proved quite effective at breaking up cavalry charges, as did the use of field fortifications that protected gunners.

Often during the Italian Wars the attacker's objective was a city or other fortification. Artillery played a major role in both defense and offense, and the evolution of big guns and the professionalization of the men who used them made this an increasingly important arm of every army. Military leaders saw that towers and high walls with crenellations were replaced with low, flat, and angle-faced bastions that could withstand repeated bombardment and could serve as protected platforms for defensive artillery. Cities realized they had to rely on militias once again if only to defend their urban homes. Nicolò Machiavelli favored native troops to mercenaries and, in 1494, organized rural Florentines into companies of 100 to 300 each under the direction of a professional soldier and each with at least 10% using the long gun known as the arquebus. In 1506 fear of armed rebellion stopped the experiment, but when Florence was besieged in 1529–1530 some 10,700 urban militiamen defended it. From 1537 Cosimo de' Medici utilized new rural militia units, as did Rome, Naples and Sicily, and Savoy and Piedmont in the 1560s.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Manufacturing; Retail Selling; Taxes and Public Finance; *Fashion and Appearance:* Art, Fashion in; Attire, Male; Livery; Social Status and Clothing; *Food and Drink:* Hunger and Famine; *Housing and Community:* Poverty and the Poor; *Politics and Warfare:* Arms and Armor; Art, Civic; Firearms and Artillery; Fortresses and Fortifications; Mercenaries; Soldiers; War and Civilians; War in Italy, 1494–1559; War in Italy to 1494; *Science and Technology:* Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Surgery

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ARMS AND ARMOR

Despite the rise of firearms, from 1350 to 1600 Italian warfare relied upon traditional European weapons. Protection in battle for infantry was simple; and though the use of knights declined, the armorer's art reached a peak in the Renaissance.

Renaissance-era infantry (men-at-arms) used a variety of weapons other than firearms. Single-handed spears, swords of all sorts, daggers, battleaxes, clubs, maces, and warhammers equipped all armies to some degree, though reliance on them tended to fade with time. Weapons mounted on 8 to 10-foot poles required both hands but tended to keep an enemy at bay. Halberds and poleaxes featured heavy blades for chopping and crushing; partisans and pikes had long spearheads for thrusting; bills were essentially large hooks, and the *penato* had both a hook to pull knights from horseback and a long, sharp spike to penetrate armor. Many pole weapons combined a blade or hammer, hook, and spear tip. To be used effectively, however, polearms required space around the soldier, which often limited their use on a battlefield.

In 1422 a Swiss army was routed by Milanese cavalry at Arbedo. Thereafter Swiss militia adopted the pike as their principal weapon, and developed the training (from boyhood) and tactics that allowed their massed, tight, bristling formations to withstand almost anything an enemy sent. By the 1440s most Swiss soldiers wielded pikes, and they won renown in victories against the Burgundians in the 1470s and thereafter as mercenaries. Pikemen needed great strength to keep the 16-foot poles tipped with a long steel spearhead level and courage in the face of charging horses. All men in a battle formation had to march together en masse, which led to the use of groups of drummers to beat cadence and officers armed with halberds to keep lines straight. During the Italian Wars (1494–1559) South German Landsknechts, who had often used huge two-handed swords, countered by copying the Swiss, and battles were often of one mass against another. In 1522 at Bicocca near Milan, however, 16,000 Swiss serving the French tried to assault an Imperial position and left 3,000 corpses as testimony to the superiority of gunfire. Despite this turning point, pikes remained at the heart of new Spanish *tercio* companies, in which gunners, men-at-arms, and pikemen worked together as units.

Long before gunpowder, archers used bows of various types to hurl projectiles at enemies. Depending on their design, these could be invaluable against infantry and cavalry, at sea, and in both attacking and defending fortified positions. Composite bows developed in Asia and used by the Byzantines, wooden longbows in the English style, and crossbows that fired short deadly bolts (rods) instead of arrows had their place on Renaissance Italian battlefields, often used alongside firearms. Two-meter tall longbows launched arrows upward so that they rained down on enemy formations, gaining striking power from gravity. Fired horizontally they could penetrate any armor except good steel plate at up to 120 yards. Mercenary English archers fighting in Italy during the 1300s were experts who had trained since boys, shooting up to ten arrows per minute. Untrained soldiers simply could not draw the longbow adequately and woods other than that of the

English yew tree were not suitable, so the longbow disappeared with the English. The crossbow had been used since the early 1100s and was only slowly replaced by firearms. The body was made of various types of wood reinforced with animal horn and sinew, and the rifle-like stock was often wrapped in an iron band. From the 1370s a powerful, flexible steel bow replaced the earlier composite one. The hemp or linen bowstrings had to be drawn with two hands or a crank to a cocked position, so an iron stirrup protruded from the front. Once drawn, the weapon was shouldered like a rifle, pointed horizontally, and fired by releasing a trigger. The bolt that it shot could penetrate the best armor, travel farther than an arrow, and be aimed with fair accuracy. A man could learn to draw and fire a crossbow very quickly, though it could only fire four bolts per minute. All Venetian citizens in the 1400s were trained to use a crossbow, and professional mercenary crossbowmen were paid according to their skill level. Shorter composite recurve bows were also used, especially by light cavalry. Incendiary or flaming arrows were not unknown, and even poisoned arrows are mentioned in sources: used by the Sieneese against Breton mercenaries in 1377.

Soldiers and knights protected themselves with shields, helmets, and armor. Shields were constructed of wood and hardened leather, and varied in size from two-yard tall *pavesi* that protected archers or gunners to smaller *tabulaccii* that were carried by cavalry or infantry to much smaller round *rotelle* or *targhe*. Men at arms wore torso body armor of quilted padding covered with shaped and hardened leather (cuirass) that was waterproofed with wax. Better-off infantry and light cavalry might have a shirt or lengthened shirt of chain mail and a cuirass of light steel or overlapping plates or scales. Head coverings varied from fancy hats of German Landsknechts to the heavy, visored *bacinetto* helmet of the Hundred Years' War era and the later open-faced sallet and the sixteenth-century's high-crested burgonet. The knight or heavy cavalryman wore the "shining" steel plate armor of legend over a loose knee-length *gonella* (tunic), or, later, a tighter-fitting quilted and padded *brigandine*. A full suit of plate armor covered the knight from head to foot. Higher-quality steel produced after the early 1400s gave better protection with less metal, and armor thickness was typically 2–3 mm. for a high-quality suit. Ornate suits were reserved for ceremonial purposes, while jousting armor was thicker and generally more protective at the expense of weight and easy movement. Milan was initially Italy's center of high-quality arms and armor, but declined with the rise of Venice in the later 1400s.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; *Economics and Work*: Manufacturing; *Family and Gender*: Heraldry; *Housing and Community*: Barbers and Surgeons; *Politics and Warfare*: Armies; Firearms and Artillery; Fortresses and Fortifications; Mercenaries; Soldiers; War in Italy, 1494–1559; War in Italy to 1494

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ART, CIVIC

Civic art was the visual expression of a city's self-identity and the ideals behind its laws, policies, and political decisions. It took many forms and appeared in many forums, and was accessible to the public. It might entail history or myth, allegories and symbols, or portraits of heroes or criminals. Much of it centered specifically on Christian figures or episodes, tying the past, present, and fate of the city to citizens' faith and divine pleasure. It aimed at impressing foreigners, inspiring civic leaders, and enhancing the patriotism of citizens and subjects. It was propaganda, but includes many of the era's artistic masterpieces.

A starting point might be Florence and David. The biblical Goliath-slayer had been a symbol of Florence's defiance of foreign tyranny since about 1402, when she defeated the expansionist efforts of the Milanese. In 1409 sculptor Donatello produced for the cathedral a marble version of David, which was relocated to the civic Palazzo Vecchio. He created his more famous bronze nude version for the Palazzo Medici courtyard, but after their ouster in 1494 the statue was also placed in the Palazzo Vecchio, along with a version by Verrocchio that Lorenzo de' Medici had sold to the government. Clearly, the Medici wanted to appropriate the city's symbol as their own. Michelangelo's giant version was originally sculpted for the cathedral, but in 1504 the republican government hijacked it to the front of the city hall (today Palazzo Vecchio). It was joined in the *piazza* by such sculpted heroes of liberty as Benvenuto Cellini's *Perseus*, Baccio Bandinelli's awkward *Hercules*, and the Medici-commissioned *Judith and Holofernes* by Donatello.

Bas reliefs, carved heraldry, statues, and even frescoes featuring civic symbolism greeted people in streets, *piazze*, and market places, and on public buildings, guild halls, gates, fountains, and bridges. Civic festivals and printed broadsheets featured patriotic artistic themes. As centers of civic life, however, city halls concentrated art where political ideology was supposedly connected to political action. Siena's republican government met in Palazzo Pubblico (built 1298–1310). In the 1330s officials had the Lorenzetti brothers and their workshop create frescoes that

juxtaposed virtues and the benefits of good government with vices and the perils unleashed by tyranny. Allegorical figures of Good Government—Concord, Peace, Fortitude, Magnanimity—form a court that produces a naturalistic sun-lit urban and rural scene of prosperity, construction, and justice. People dance, learn, buy, sell, build, and marry because the government fosters what is good. Figures of War, Furor, Cruelty, and Greed fill the court of Tyrannus, which produces a cityscape of ruin, crime, violence, and poverty. The message: those forming the government choose the city's fate. In the adjoining Map Room is a large contemporary fresco by Simone Martini of *Maestà*, or Mary—Siena's patron saint—and Jesus holding court beneath a bright canopy. Allegorical figures of Faith, Hope, and Charity informing Good Government link the religious imperative of the Madonna's holy favor to happy and prosperous daily life produced by Good Government.

In the city hall of Siena's rival, Florence, civic imagery was originally far less sophisticated than Siena's. Fourteenth-century decoration featured Madonnas, saints such as patron John the Baptist, and portraits of Florentine chancellors. Fifteenth-century artists contributed more secular and Classically themed figures from history and mythology, plus portraits of Dante and Petrarch. Medici themes crept in during their hegemony (1434–1494), with Davids linking their power and patronage to Florentine history and liberty, and other biblical subjects such as Moses presenting God's law and the three Magi, a family devotion. Return to republican government in 1494 meant expunging Medici traces. A new Great Council on the Venetian model required a renovated grand hall, whose walls were to be frescoed with great Florentine battle scenes (Anghiari and Cascina) by, respectively, Leonardo and Michelangelo. Reinstalled Medici rulers from 1512 to 1527 ignored the Palazzo, but from 1540 Duke Cosimo I used the Palazzo's top floor as private apartments and had the republican Great Hall transformed into a Classically appointed basilica-like throne room, complete with a statue of him as Augustus Caesar. He had the walls raised 23 feet for better light. In 1563 he set the “army” of his favorite artist, Giorgio Vasari, to work on walls and ceiling. His two masons, two carpenters, three architects, 21 painters, 35 sculptors and plaster molders, a glassmaker, and a gilder finished the transformation. It was a masterpiece of Florentine triumphalism, equating Florentine power and success with the Medici. At the ceiling's center Cosimo himself is shown being made a god (apotheosis), as had been Florence's symbolic hero, Hercules.

In Venice, fourteenth-century religious imagery served as a background in the Great Council Hall of the Doge's palazzo until the space was gutted by fire in 1577. Venetians had always attributed their successes to divine favor, and unlike Vasari, the painter Tintoretto created a crowded and somberly toned *Paradise* ruled by Christ and Mary as the room's focal point. Good judgment and sober decision making lead to paradise, one might conclude. At its ceiling's center rises Venice

allegorically apotheosized, surrounded by great twisted columns echoing those supposedly from the Temple of Solomon and later moved to St. Peter's in Rome.

See also: *Arts:* Antiquity, Cult of; Art Patronage; Portraits; *Economics and Work:* Guilds; *Family and Gender:* Heraldry; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and *Piazze*; *Politics and Warfare:* City Halls; Contado and Subject Towns; Republics; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Civic Festivals; *Religion and Beliefs:* Chapels; Churches

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Artillery. *See* Firearms and Artillery

CITIZENSHIP

The concept of citizenship was reborn in the West with the revival of cities and of Roman law in the eleventh century. In Antiquity one was or was not a citizen of the Roman Empire, and citizenship had its privileges. For example, St. Paul invoked his citizenship rights to be taken to Rome and executed by the sword rather than by more gruesome means. In the Middle Ages, granting citizenship was an imperial prerogative, but emperors had gladly handed it over—sold it, really—to the burgeoning cities and city-states of northern and central Italy. In the south, which was ruled by kings, the rulers retained the right. By the early Renaissance era citizenship in a major city, lesser town, or even a rural commune was a mark of status and a point of personal honor. It implied one's value to the community, one's control of taxable property, the object of one's political allegiance (the city), and

determined in part one's ability to hold public office. One could be born into a family of citizens or might be granted citizenship as an immigrant. Venice recognized a firm distinction: *originarii* were citizens by birthright, while citizens *de intus et de extra* had acquired citizenship after petition and a required period of residence. Elsewhere acquired citizenship was *de statuto* or *ex privilegio*, by statute or from privilege. Because citizenship was determined by local statute and actions by communal authorities, there were many rules and many changes to rules over time.

After the Black Death in the late 1340s, depopulated cities scrambled to replace the dead. One tool was to entice immigrants with reduced obstacles to the status of citizen. For example, Orvieto offered immediate full citizenship along with freedom from taxes and military service for ten years. Venice needed workers in specific fields, such as shipbuilding, and set lower residency requirements after crises in 1348, 1356, 1381–1385, and 1407. Siena even offered citizenship to Jewish physicians.

In Rome, the Roman People (Popolo), the municipal government, set the rules and conferred citizenship. Popes could also grant the privilege. Residence had to be three years, and the citizen had to own real estate. In 1580, the rules changed somewhat: physical residence had to be at least nine months per year, and real estate had to be a home and vineyard.

Venice's uniquely structured social pyramid gave special meaning to "citizen." At the top, and in controlling positions of authority were the nobles, who were descended from specifically recognized families. In 1581 they were 4.5% of the population. "Citizens" as a class were a middle class of professionals, bureaucrats, merchants, skilled artisans, and others whose value to the state was high. They constituted about 5.3%. The remaining 90% were the *populares* or "people," who were not considered "citizens." "Original citizens" were rather loosely defined before 1569, when the Great Council decreed that one needed to have been born in Venice, along with one's father and grandfather, each the legitimate offspring of a valid marriage, and each having refrained from a manual occupation. A grant of original citizenship could also be given to needed specialized workers in glass-making or silk production; illegitimate or bankrupted nobles could also acquire original status from the Great Council. *De intus* status had levels as well. The highest consisted of those with 25 or more years of residence and payment of taxes; next came those with at least 15 years residence and tax payment, or eight years if he had married a Venetian; and finally, "long-term" residents. Status was not just a matter of honor—and the right to a coat of arms—but of eligibility for lucrative offices, tax breaks, and the ability to conduct certain kinds of business.

Further legal uncertainties arose after a larger city-state, such as Milan, Venice, or Florence, absorbed smaller towns that had differing definitions and rules regarding citizenship. After Venice came to control Vicenza in 1404, the Republic promised Vicentine citizens that they would hold joint Venetian citizenship *de intus*. Soon thereafter the concession was extended to much of the new *Terraferma*, including

Padua, Treviso, and Belluno, and later Brescia and Crema. But this new status provided few advantages. By 1450 non-Venetian citizens *de intus* were demoted to “foreign subjects.” What the state gave it could take away. In Tuscany, citizens of subject cities automatically acquired Florentine citizenship, if not all of its privileges.

A woman automatically inherited her citizenship from her father. If she married a man from a different jurisdiction, she automatically acquired his identity. So if a Milanese woman married a Roman man living in Florence, the couple was considered Roman, as would be their children. But did she lose her native citizenship? Did she automatically regain it if her marriage was annulled? If widowed, could she renounce her husband’s citizenship status and regain her native status? A second or third marriage compounded the complexities. Legal specialists presented their opinions as cases arose, but these could easily differ. Since citizenship usually entailed rights and obligations that the male family head saw to, there was a level of irrelevance where women were involved. On the other hand, the local rules to sue in court, for example for the return of a dowry, could make a big difference.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Guilds; Trade, Seaborne; *Family and Gender*: Espousal and Wedding; *Virtù* and Honor; *Housing and Community*: Foreign Communities; Jewish Communities; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; Contado and Subject Towns; Urban Councils and Assemblies

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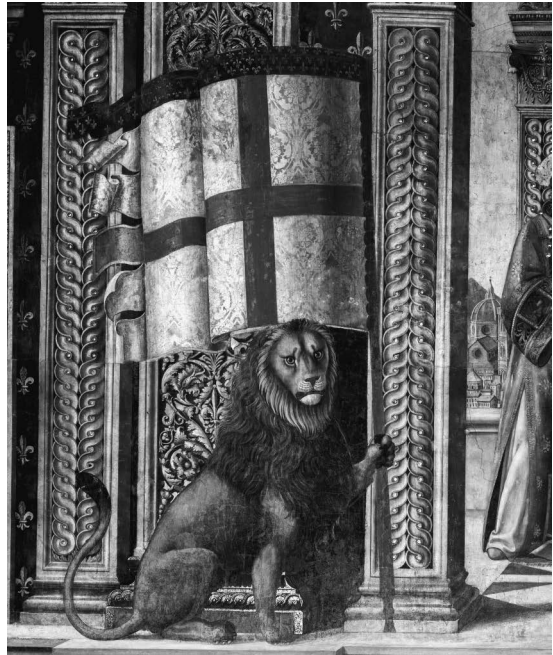
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CITY HALLS

During the second half of the thirteenth century, late medieval communal governments across northern and central Italy began housing themselves in purpose-built palazzi. Volterra’s Palazzo dei Priori was completed in 1257; San Gimignano’s

palazzo for the *podestà*, the 54-meter high Torre Grossa, in 1288; Pistoia's Palazzo Communale in 1294; Perugia's Palazzo dei Priori in 1297; and Lucca's Palazzo Ducale (Palazzo Pubblico after 1370; blown up in 1576) in 1322 by Lord Castruccio Castracane. Siena began its Palazzo Pubblico for the civic government of The Nine in 1297, and rival Florence followed, beginning its new Palazzo dei Priori (later Palazzo Vecchio) in 1299. Governments in both Tuscan cities had been arguing for new quarters since the mid-1280s. From 1218 Padua's government operated from the commercial center of the Palazzo della Ragione, which opened its new Hall of the Council in 1306. Typically these structures included an assembly hall, courtrooms, a chapel, one or more audience rooms, a jail, archival space, and a bell tower, led by Siena's 102-meter high monument.

Siena's Palazzo was located on the city's largest market *piazza*, San Gimignano's on the Cathedral Square, and Florence's on land confiscated from the regime's most powerful internal enemies. Tuscan palazzi tended to be more castle-like, reflecting the civic turmoil that swirled about them. Elected officials, who had occupied rented quarters, lived together and demanded high security. Northern city halls often had ground floors that featured shops or other businesses fronted by open arcades. Since governmental decisions were delivered orally from city hall, each featured an open *piazza*, most of which were paved by 1400. The citizenry was also called to this space by the ringing of the communal bell to witness official swearings in and to voice its vote (plebiscite or *parlamento*) in communal matters. If access could be limited by blocking streets, then the side that controlled access controlled the vote. When in 1434 Cosimo de'Medici returned unexpectedly from exile in Venice, his faction filled the Piazza Signoria and blocked access to those who would vote against his residence.



The *marzocco*, or lion of Florence, displays the banner of the People of Florence in this fresco by Domenico Ghirlandaio (1449–1494) in the Palazzo Vecchio's Room of the Lilies. Lilies, or fleurs-de-lys, symbolically connected Florence to France, while the recently completed Cathedral dome appears in the back. The most famous *marzocco* is the statue (1418–1420) by Donatello (1386–1466) that stood outside the Palazzo. (Antonio Quattrone/Archivio Quattrone/Mondadori Portfoliovia Getty Images)

The *piazza*'s Loggia dei Lanzi, which now displays numerous Renaissance statues, was built in the 1370s as a stage for appearances of the priors when it rained.

Despite sometimes radical changes in regime, these structures survived the Renaissance era, and most remain standing. They were important as symbols of civic honor and success, and served as symbols of transition and legitimacy when a city was conquered, a lord (*signore*) rose up, or a dynasty fell. Control of the palazzo meant control of the government; but closing off the palazzo signaled despotism. Seeking to screen their power in Florence, the early Medicis maintained residence in their family palazzo on Via Larga while manipulating elections. The restored Republic (1494–1512) decorated the Palazzo dei Priori with art by the likes of Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci celebrating its past, including the famed David. When the Medici returned to power in 1512, they resided in the Palazzo de' Medici, disdainfully using the Great Hall, symbolic center of Republican Florence, as their bodyguards' barracks. Following a short absence (1527–1531), Alessandro de' Medici reappeared as imperially appointed duke and ruler. He and his later successor, Cosimo I, lived in the Palazzo dei Priori, now a ducal palace like those in Ferrara or Urbino. Cosimo had its main hall expanded and redecorated to reflect his family's glory. In 1565, Cosimo moved his residence across the Arno River to the enlarged Palazzo Pitti—today a major museum and site of the Boboli Gardens. With the completion of the Uffizi (Offices) for state workers in 1574, Palazzo dei Priori lost its bureaucratic function. Now designated the Old or Former (Vecchio) Palazzo, it hosted Cosimo's alchemical laboratories and served as a museum.

Staffing the Palazzo Vecchio in the 1300s

“Ten golden florins were assigned each day to the Priors solely for their food. . . . This was for the maintenance of the Gonfalonier, the Priors, the notary, the nine *donzelli*, or office servants, five monks who served the chapel of the palace, two who had charge of the seal of the Commune, and the almsgiver and bursar, who were also monks; there were also the curial notary, two mace-bearers, and a cook who was bound to keep two scullions; two trumpeters and two horn players, to play while the Signori were at table, four bell ringers and one servant. . . .”

Source: Modesto Rastrelli, *Illustrazione Istorica* . . . (1792). In Janet Ross, ed. *Florentine Palaces and Their Stories*. London: J.M. Dent, 1905, p. 357.

Rome's ancient center was Capitoline Hill (Campidoglio). The commune established in 1144 governed the city from its medieval Palazzo del Senatore

and Palazzo dei Conservatori. The commune survived in name as papal control encroached during the later Middle Ages and early Renaissance era. It lost much independence under Pope Nicholas V—who as Rome’s ruler rebuilt the dilapidated Palazzo dei Conservatori—and all independence under Julius II. The hill-top retained its symbolic importance, despite its neglected state serving as a stage for civic theater, such as the city’s birthday (Palilia; revived in 1483), official welcomes, and patrician weddings. Under Pope Paul III (1534–1549) Michelangelo and others redesigned the Campidoglio, which had been further degraded during Rome’s Sack in 1527. Paul had the ancient bronze equestrian statue of Emperor Marcus Aurelius placed in the middle of the new Mannerist-style pavement. Two existing communal structures were completely renovated, and a third without function was added for the sake of aesthetic balance. Imposed by the pope and his artists, the new, Renaissance space would look magnificent but serve little purpose.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Civic; Portraits; *Economics and Work:* Taxes and Public Finance; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and *Piazze*; Prisons; Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare:* Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Civic Magistracies and Offices; Guelfs and Ghibellines and Other Political Factions; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; Republics

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CIVIC MAGISTRACIES AND OFFICES

Every city had numerous officials who were responsible for some aspect of the common good or the success of a ruler's regime. For example, around 1500 Venice had 831, many of them with terms of less than a year. Some of these men acted by themselves, and others as members of permanent or ad hoc committees, boards, magistracies, or other policy or decision making or advisory bodies. Over the Renaissance era the number and nature of offices expanded, both in republics and in lordships, but the patterns of filling jobs remained rather constant.

Offices were of two types, permanent or ad hoc. Permanent offices involved matters of constant concern, such as criminal justice, taxation, and military preparedness. Ad hoc committees were formed when an emergency struck. Famine, war, plague, or civil unrest called for extraordinary measures to procure and distribute food, raise and train an army or hire mercenaries, take measures against the spread of disease, or defend people and property against mob violence. Ad hoc individual positions might also have included a place on a specific diplomatic mission, as an organizer for special civic festivities, or as an extraordinary representative of the state to a dependent town. Some ad hoc committees or boards became permanent over time, and some evolved to become policy and decision-making bodies. Both of these were true of public health committees, for example, which by 1600 had in many places become magistracies with their own police and judicial functions. These same bodies saw their functions expand, as matters of public health came to include dealing with prostitutes, vagabonds, and the resident poor.

For both permanent and ad hoc positions there were strict time limits on office holders and bans against serving consecutive terms. The usual basic qualification for holding any office was being adult male citizens. Fifteenth-century Florence required any officeholder to have been born legitimately, have no tax payments in arrears, and have no charges of fraud against him. Early on guild membership was also required. Unofficially after 1434, he also had to be a supporter of the Medici political faction. For some offices the bar was raised and requirements might also include property ownership or a minimal level of taxable wealth, noble status, advanced age, experience in another office, or a level of special expertise. Examples might be an architect to run a construction project, physicians on a public health board, or a military man to help prepare a city's defenses. Permanent bodies often had to include representatives from each of the city's quarters or other political divisions.

For election, Florence and other cities relied on a body of scrutinizers who reviewed the list of potential office holders and ruled on their eligibility. Between men rotating out of office and other disqualifications, perhaps a third or fewer of potential candidates were declared eligible and their names placed in a bag. In a

direct election, such as Florence held, names were simply drawn by a child or a monk for each office. In Bologna, however, the person whose name tag was drawn was matched with a randomly drawn office tag and the person nominated another eligible citizen for the named post. In some cities some officials were chosen by their predecessors, and some were appointed by the ruling body such as the Nine in Siena or Montepulciano's Five.

Venice had by far the most complex system. Most offices were restricted to the middle level of society, the citizens, about 6% of the population. Important offices such as ministers to the doge, ambassadors, and commission heads were restricted to the nobles, about 5% of the population. For each of these positions each senator nominated someone and the body voted up or down for eligibility, and then of the eligible those for each office. Middle- and lower-level officials were elected by the Great Council, with as many as 1,500 voting members present. Important officials among this group were nominated by the Signoria or the Senate, while lesser officials were nominated by Council committees of four members who were chosen by lot. The nobles of the Senate and Great Council were thus the gatekeepers to public office.

Officials who handled money, either collecting or disbursing, could easily fall prey to temptation and line their pockets; judicial officials could be bribed or use the system to reward friends or punish enemies; electoral officials could sabotage the scrutinizing process, which is how the Medici faction controlled Florence for 60 years. Many communal governments audited the accounts of officials upon leaving office to lessen the possibility of corruption, and trials for misconduct were not uncommon.

In signorial states the rulers chose their most important officials according to their own priorities, whether loyalty, competence, or family ties. Many left less important officials to the choice of citizens or an oligarchy of important families.

However they were filled, offices could be well-paying stepping stones to higher status. They were a source of personal honor and recognition, and some included significant authority. Competent and honest performance at home or abroad on the government's behalf recommended a young man to employers, patrons, and potential in-laws.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Taxes and Public Finance; *Family and Gender:* *Virtù* and Honor; *Housing and Community:* Health Commissions and Boards; Prisons; *Politics and Warfare:* Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Citizenship; Contado and Subject Towns; Crime and Punishments; Urban Councils and Assemblies

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CONTADO AND SUBJECT TOWNS

In medieval Italy, counts (*conti*) and other nobles controlled the countryside from their castles or from cities as they resuscitated. The area surrounding the count’s seat was called the *contado*, and the residents (*contadini*) owed the lord taxes and various other obligations. By the Renaissance era, the northern counts had disappeared, but control of the countryside from the urban centers did not. In addition, major centers such as Milan, Florence, and Venice created small empires, conquering or absorbing smaller towns and their hinterlands. Even popes went to war to gain control over territory and cities and to enhance the Papal States.

Renaissance-era city-states—urban centers and the territory they controlled—were nominally under the sovereignty of the Holy Roman Emperor, except Venice. Since the mid-1200s cities had been able to act freely and did so. Fourteenth-century Siena, a major economic competitor with the larger and richer Florence, unilaterally declared a *contado* stretching out 39 miles in all directions from the city. At its height it claimed 200 towns and their hinterlands as subjects. Each August, on the Feast of the Assumption of Mary, representatives presented to Siena’s government fine cloths, candles, and/or money as tribute. The wax alone amounted to some 30,000 pounds annually. Florence, too, demanded wax, silver, incense, and cash from its dependents each June on the Feast of St. John. Treviso, Venetian from 1388, had to celebrate “days of submission” each year, commemorating its “liberation” from Padua. In one way these exercises were humiliating, but they also cemented the ties between the mother city and its subjects.

These ties included shares of taxes, the installation of a governor or *podestà*, and sometimes citizenship. High taxes angered the populace, but fed the state’s

coffers. Often rulers provided a set amount that needed to be collected, and each subject area, rural and urban, decided how to divide the burden. The *podestà* and his staff represented the rulers to the people and theoretically vice versa. After capturing Pistoia, Florence allowed its residents to choose their own *podestà*; but from 1399 he had to be a Florentine. Most states imposed *podestà* on subject cities. Since subject towns and cities had often been independent, residents had had citizenship rights and some form of “liberties,” usually meaning a communal government. Florence tended to accept these, generally granting Florentine citizenship unless the city, such as Pisa or Siena, had had a history of resistance. Venice attracted subjection by promising that all urban citizens would henceforth be Venetian citizens, too, with important commercial rights. The government at first ignored and then abandoned this perk, removing the incentive. When Venetian territory was invaded in 1509, every subject town and city abandoned its allegiance.

Allegiance was one of the most important elements of the relationship. Florence had mountainous northern borders whose first line of defense was a few forts and the rural folk. In the fourteenth century these people paid up to four times as much in taxes as lowlanders, despite widespread poverty, largely for the upkeep of the border. When Milan repeatedly attacked around 1400, the highlanders rebelled, forced Florence’s hand, and received tax reductions. Nonetheless, creating and maintaining a territorial state was expensive. Fifteenth-century Florence spent some 130,000 florins each year for mercenaries, garrisons, and fortifications. Venice had a similar problem on its northern border. The region of Friuli was arid, mountainous, poverty-wracked, disease-ridden, and riven by feuds among castle-holding landlords. It lay, however, across alpine passes that Venice needed

Podestà

Podestà—same plural and singular—derived from the Italian word for “power.” During the fourteenth century these were professional itinerant judges and peacemakers. With entourages of guards, messengers, and notaries, they were hired for a set period and given almost unlimited powers by communes whose governments were unable to resolve serious factional disputes. Some remained and became lords (*signori*). Early Renaissance-era *podestà* still moved often, but had morphed into mere judges. Dominant cities routinely sent citizens as *podestà* into subject towns and areas as governors to ensure their control. Serving as *podestà* was a useful step on the political ladder.

to control for trade and against invading Austrians, Turks, or Hungarians. Friulians had little to live on and little to tax, and many spoke only a dialect unknown to foreigners. Allegiances among the 835 villages ran to the local castellans and feudal families, making political union with Venice difficult. Its largest city, Udine, had only 14,600 residents in 1548.

For rural people, living in the shadow of Venice, Florence, Rome, or Milan generally meant higher taxes, more obligations such as service in the militia, and less ability to shape the area's political life. But there were advantages, too. Contadini often had ready access to the dominant city's markets, especially important for selling their shares of crops or other products. The state government provided courts for justice, especially useful against local bullies; territorial defense probably lessened the threats from brigands and enemy armies; and urban landlords were more likely than feudal landlords to invest in the productivity of the land. For most contadini, however, it probably mattered little whether the landlord was Milanese or Florentine, and in the Veneto the larger cities such as Verona and Brescia maintained direct control over their hinterlands.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Clothmaking; Mezzadria; Putting-Out System; Sheep and Wool Economy in the South; Taxes and Public Finance; *Housing and Community:* Villages and Village Life; Villas; *Politics and Warfare:* Civic Magistracies and Offices; Rebellions and Revolts

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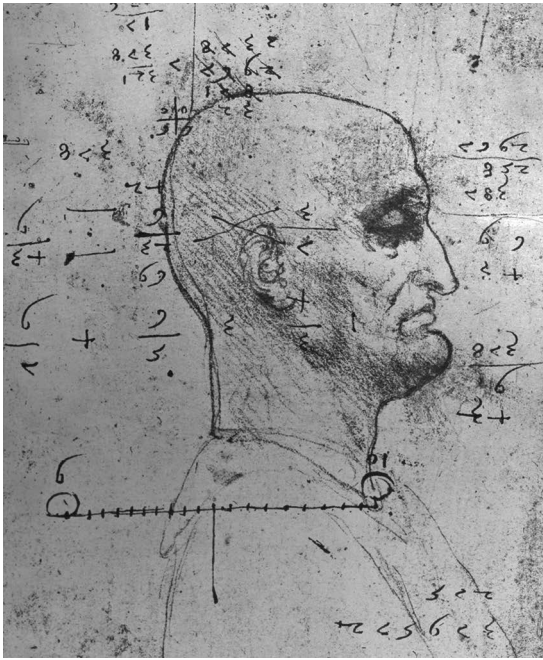
CRIME AND PUNISHMENTS

Renaissance-era Italy presented a checkerboard of jurisdictions with a variety of legal traditions. The differing histories of south and north meant that Aragonese and Roman elements met feudalism in the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily, while most northern states and communes blended Lombard, Carolingian, common, and Roman law. Northern communes had purged most feudal influence but embraced the evolution of their own statutory codes. Over all of them was the influence of the Church's canon law, which shaped criminal statutes on matters such as witchcraft, marital separation, heresy, blasphemy, miscegenation, and sodomy. Canon law courts clashed for jurisdiction with secular legal forums over law-breaking clergy, religious, and, theoretically, university students.

By 1350, most states had sophisticated codes of what they considered crimes and how these were to be punished. Councils, assemblies, and lords updated these throughout the following centuries as threats to the social and political fabric emerged and changed. Political elites generally defined criminal behavior and oversaw its punishment.

Crimes generally fell into one of several categories: violent injury to another person, theft or destruction of property, threatening or defrauding the state, disturbing the peace, and breaking moral statutes or those that limited the behaviors of people in certain classes (status crimes). Prescribed punishments could differ according to the type of perpetrator or victim (sex, age, social class, and residency), the level of premeditation or severity (value of goods stolen, body parts injured), or surrounding circumstances (provocation, intoxication, or occurrence during Carnival or Mass). Crimes incurring the death penalty differed widely across states, and might include thievery, counterfeiting, sodomy, incest, blasphemy, witchcraft, and murder. The most common crime seems to have been physical violence: for example, 60% of Sicilian cases studied, Bologna and Lucca 65%, and Mantua 50% (1432).

Research into criminal prosecutions has shown that most crimes were committed by lower-class men. A study of courts in Brescia found that nearly all criminals were lower class. Elsewhere, some crimes, including rape, assault, and sodomy, routinely involved upper-class males, while women were likely to be guilty of petty



Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) probably drew this so-called head of a criminal from life, possibly after execution. Some judicial palazzi, such as Florence's Bargello, featured drawings of paintings of wanted or executed criminals as a sign that the commune was diligent in punishing the guilty. (Print Collector/Getty Images)

theft, sumptuary violations, witchcraft, or prostitution outside prescribed areas. Fifteenth-century nobles in Romagna were exempt from punishment, and Venetian records contain only one noble thief.

Most states had some form of police, who were responsible for keeping the peace and apprehending lawbreakers. Unless an officer witnessed a crime, he relied on others who had seen or heard of the act. If caught quickly for a minor offence, the suspect might be tried and sentenced on the spot by arresting officials. If the suspect had fled, he could be reported to authorities who would try and sentence him *in absentia*, a process compatible with Roman law. Flight was considered an indication of guilt. In Milan's court of the *podestà* between 1385 and

1429 two-thirds of convictions were *in absentia*. Criminal activity might also be heard of or reported to authorities who then conducted an independent investigation, or inquisition. Most northern cities had guilds of trained, professional judges who handled civil matters, while trained, professional but foreign judges, such as the *podestà*, tried criminal cases. Feudal courts in the south and Sicily had jurisdiction over some 75% of residents, giving power of life and death to local barons.

In Venice, witnesses or the victim would report the offender to authorities who jailed or sought to apprehend him. Evidence and testimony against the accused was then gathered, and formal charges recorded. Given 8 to 15 days to report for trial, the accused was presented the charges and trial venue, and in some cases tortured to extract a confession. In court, the prosecution read the testimony and shared its conclusions. The defense's rebuttal was then read to the court, which quickly concluded with its decision and recommended penalty. Some decisions were referred to a higher council for review, which might grant "grace" by lifting or reducing the penalty.

Criminal Insults

Insulting another person was a crime. What constituted an insult depended on jurisdiction, intent, social context of the words, and the words themselves. Cities might list punishable insults or leave definition to judge or *podestà*. Some implied threats; others attacked male or female honor or truthfulness (“coward!,” “whore!,” or “liar!”). Insults might claim criminal or immoral behavior or false status (“bastard!”), or could curse someone (“burn in hell!”). Insults were considered verbal assaults and often provoked criminal responses such as violence in return. Those who hurled insults disturbed the peace and were usually fined: Savona had a one lira limit, while the legal scholar Bartolus recommended one lira per insulting term.

Most penalties were fines, though imprisonment was often easier on the poor. More serious penalties included temporary or permanent exile, service on Venetian, papal, or Tuscan galleys, mutilation, the stocks, or public whipping. When death sentences were carried out, they could be grisly. Serious offenders might first be tortured, have their eyes gouged out, or be otherwise symbolically mutilated. Hanging was common, and somewhat less so decapitation with sword, ax, or a small guillotine-like device. Witches, heretics, and sodomites might be burned, either alive or after having been strangled. Drawing-and-quartering, in which the convict’s body was literally divided up, was reserved for the very worst. Other means of execution included being pressed to death between boards, drowning, or being broken on the wheel.

See also: *Family and Gender*: Childhood; Homosexuality and Sodomy; Servants, Household; *Fashion and Appearance*: Sumptuary Laws; *Housing and Community*: Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Prisons; Villages and Village Life; Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; Exile and Exiles; Rebellions and Revolts; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Drunkenness; Executions; Gambling; *Primary Document*: Crime and Punishment in Florence: Luca Landucci’s Diary (1465–1497)

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Diplomacy. *See* Ambassadors and Diplomacy

EXILE AND EXILES

Politics in Renaissance Italy was a risky business. When one found oneself opposed to a ruler or administration, or on the losing side of an important debate, the result was often judicial exile. The political lines of Guelf/Ghibelline, White Guelf/Black Guelf, pro-Habsburg/pro-Valois, Medicean/republican, and many others created serious rifts in Italian cities. During troubled times enemies of a ruling party or regime might be taxed or otherwise harassed, thrown in prison, or exiled. Removing adversaries or potential adversaries strengthened those in power and helped reduce the likelihood of rebellion or subversion. Exiles were often noted allies of foreign foes, whose presence had been seen as undermining the regime or otherwise threatening the peace or security of the state. Only factionless Venice exiled people who actually committed crimes against the government. When one city gained control over another, the victors often sent defeated leaders into exile, such as the 76 Volterrans sent abroad by victorious Florence in 1472.

Unlike Dante the poet, most exiles returned willingly when their allotted time was up (usually a matter of several years) or the home regime relented or fell. In 1354 Siena’s government of The Nine recalled 895 exiles, including many

knights needed to defend the city. A year later The Nine fell from power. Cosimo de' Medici famously fell afoul of the Albizzi family-led republican Florentine government and was banished to the Veneto in 1433. A few months later the tables turned, and he returned to his position of unofficial power, exiling over 100 of his political enemies, few of whom ever returned. Fifteen years later the mercenary captain Francesco Sforza assumed control of Milan in the face of republican opposition and soon had a list of 44 families to be removed. After the Medici were restored to power in 1530 by Charles V, they sent between 150 and 170 families into exile for three years. This sentence was extended for many, but eventually all were called back. Some, however, did not return, and in 1545 Florence ordered that any not complying be killed if found.

Keeping one's friends close and one's enemies closer was one of Nicolò Machiavelli's suggestions, and smart rulers understood his reasoning. Exiles were notorious for plotting against their erstwhile home cities. Sometimes this meant circles of disgruntled ex-patricians harmlessly railing against their foes, but it could also mean very wealthy and well-networked men of power and authority gathering soldiers, supplies, and allies with an eye on overthrowing the homeland. Fifteenth-century Naples refused to repatriate exiled barons who could return only by force. Some of these banned knights became *banditi* or bandits, forming gangs that lived outside the law and off what they could steal. In the 1480s and 1490s exiled nobles urged Charles VIII of France to invade Naples, which he did in 1494. During the subsequent Italian Wars of the late 1400s and 1500s men, supplies, and allies were in abundance across the peninsula, and exiles often made up elements of Habsburg, Valois, Venetian, and papal armies.

Governments kept watch on their expatriates through reports on activities from friendly host governments and traveling merchants. They were also quite good at using spies, even infiltrating circles of powerful exiles, and intercepting and reading mail. Really dangerous exiles, of course, could be—and were—assassinated. For their parts, exiles also worked at a distance by keeping political pots boiling back home. Funding and supporters bolstered opposition parties, while spies and informants apprized exiles of weaknesses and opportunities. Of course, exiles could miscalculate. In 1470 a group seized Florentine Prato as a base from which to attack Florence. They were all captured, marched back to Florence, and promptly beheaded. When exiles landed in an unfriendly city, its government could harness the disaffected for its own purposes, as Milan did three times against Genoa in 1477 and 1478. The problem was that once back in Genoa the ex-exiles turned on the Milanese, thwarting their plans of conquest.

Life as an exile could be lived in fear and frustration or relative comfort. Some orders specified where an exile could reside: one's own villa, a town controlled by the home city, or a foreign city or territory. To lessen the likelihood of collusion,

governments often split up members of factions, parties, or even families, sending them to different locations. When Galeazzo Sforza of Milan was assassinated in 1476, the three rival Sforza contenders were initially scattered into exile in Pisa, Bari, and Perugia. Cosimo de' Medici was accompanied into exile in 1433 by seven relatives who were assigned residencies in Ancona, Fano, Padua, Rimini, Rome, and Venice. Usually one's close family and servants accompanied him, though business, employees, and property often needed looking after, requiring one's wife or partner to remain. Family left behind, however, gave governments hostages they could use against exile misbehavior. Exile could be expensive, since quarters had to be rented and a temporary household established. Some exiles fled with little or nothing; others had their wealth confiscated by the state. Businesses were disrupted, as were networks of support, so borrowing became necessary but often difficult. Life in exile could be harsh, increasing the victim's anger and resentment and leading to retribution. On the other hand, one could make new friends and business or political contacts while abroad. Machiavelli used his exile in 1512 to pen *The Prince*, by which he sought to return to Medici good graces. Humanist scholar and critic of Cosimo Francesco Filelfo, who suffered for making Dante into an anti-Medicean prophet, spent some of his time in the 1430s writing *On Exile*, a series of dialogues featuring fellow expatriates discussing the Classical experience and their own. Exile is also a subject in humanist Leonbattista Alberti's *On the Family*. The Alberti had been exiled from Florence from before Leonbattista's birth in Genoa in 1404, and the scholar depicts family members discussing the roles the experience had played in life of the family.

See also: *Arts*: Dante in Popular Culture; *Family and Gender*: Families, Noble and Patrician; *Housing and Community*: Foreign Communities; Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare*: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Citizenship; Crime and Punishments; Mercenaries; Rebellions and Revolts; *Recreation and Social Customs*: News; Women, Letters, and Letter Writing

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FIREARMS AND ARTILLERY

The idea of propelling a projectile from a tube with gunpowder arrived in the West with the Renaissance. If the tube could be carried and fired by a single gunner, it was a firearm; if it could not, it was an artillery piece. Both became increasingly popular with armies across the period, and gradual improvements ensured that gunpowder weapons would soon rule the battlefield.

The earliest Italian firearms were the *scioppo* and the somewhat smaller *scioppetto*, dating to the early fourteenth century. They were little more than two- or three-foot long tubes into the rear of which gunpowder and a quarter or half-ounce ball of lead were rammed from the front. A small hole over the gunpowder allowed ignition with a handheld match or fuse, and the projectile went on its way. Florence ordered such guns for its militia as early as 1326, and the first recorded use in an Italian battle was at Cividale in 1331. Their bulky design and unreliability were better suited to sieges than fluid battlefields. Like all guns before rifles, they were less accurate than bows, and gunpowder needed development before it could be trusted. Verona was said to have developed a cart that mounted 144 *scioppi* in sets of 12 that simultaneously fired one-inch diameter balls. No records testify to its use, though three were abandoned and captured by the Paduans at Castagnaro in 1387. The design was not repeated until Leonardo's famous drawing of a similar weapon. At the other end of the scale, *Bombarde* fired 300-pound balls of stone or iron from a 20-foot long barrel. Dragged on sledges, these behemoths were limited to good weather and siege situations. The earliest Italian use was by Galeotto Malatesta in 1357.

The fifteenth century saw decisive developments in both types of weapons. About mid-century the arquebus emerged to replace earlier handguns. A wooden stock cradled a 40-inch barrel. Firing was mechanical, which meant the piece could be held by both hands, aimed, and fired from the shoulder like a crossbow.

The mechanism was a matchlock, a spring-loaded pivoting S-shaped lever, one end of which held the lit match necessary for igniting the gunpowder. After cocking, a trigger released the spring and the match ignited the powder that propelled the lead ball. Around 1500 the wheellock mechanism began service in arquebuses and later in single-handed pistols (a cavalry weapon from the 1540s that finished the lance-armed knight). Instead of match ember, a spinning steel wheel struck iron pyrite, creating a small shower of sparks that ignited the powder. Both types functioned rather reliably because of advances in gunpowder recipes and preparation from the 1430s. Unlike a crossbowman a gunner had a very complex tool that needed constant care and practice in loading and firing. In part because the ignited powder left hot remains that could in turn ignite powder that was immediately reloaded, the rate of fire of a well-handled arquebus was from one to two shots per minute, compared with four for a crossbow and ten for a long or recurve bow. Even so, during the War of Ferrara (1482–4) Milan fielded 1,200 gunners but only 233 crossbowmen. In 1490 Venice ordered all crossbows replaced by arquebuses, and by 1508 its militia was fully outfitted with firearms. In the early 1520s the final major step took place with the success against armored cavalry of the musket. At six feet long, it weighed 15 to 20 pounds, was cradled in a tall Y-shaped fork and equipped with a match or wheellock firing mechanism, and fired a ball one inch in diameter. In April 1524 a French retreat was seriously hampered by gunners in ambush, who killed both commanders and proved the offensive value of the firearms. Mercenary Landsknechts adopted the arquebus as well as the pike and often fought in mixed formations. In 1526 between 1,000 and 1,500 Imperial gunners broke up forming Swiss pikemen and counterattacking French cavalry led by King Francis himself.

Fifteenth-century developments in artillery saw barrels strengthened and lengthened; bronze replaced iron barrels, and iron cannonballs replaced stone; and more and better powder was used per pound of projectile. The Venetian *condottiero* Bartolommeo Colleoni is said to have first mounted cannon on wheeled carts in the mid-1400s, at least solving one problem of mobility. By 1490 Italian armies had at least eight distinctive sizes of cannon, from large *bombarde* firing 330-pound stones (and using 50 pounds of powder per shot) to the *passovolante* that fired an iron ball of 11 to 17 pounds and *cerbottana* with shot of 2.5 to 4 pounds.

Charles VIII's French invasion of 1494 introduced very mobile siege artillery in his train of some 40 cannon. During the Italian Wars (1494–1559) artillery grew smaller, became more mobile, and were better adapted for use on the battlefield. In 1503 at Cerignola repeated French charges were ground down by dug-in arquebus-armed gunners supported by field artillery. At Ravenna in 1512

Gunpowder

By 1350, Europeans had effective gunpowder made of saltpeter (KNO_3 or potassium nitrate), charcoal (birch, alder, or willow), and sulfur. They quickly learned to vary the saltpeter percentage to make it most efficient for differing calibers and strengths of gun barrels. This was the scarcest ingredient, and European “plantations” for harvesting the source manure appeared before 1400. Even so, Venice imported a great deal from the East. Finely ground (“mealed”) gunpowder was less stable and reliable than “corned” or granulated, which replaced mealed throughout Italy after 1520. Gunpowder was moistened and shaped into loaves for storage and handling.

Spanish and French artillery held the first field artillery duel. Alfonso d’Este of Ferrara built up a large and high-quality collection of artillery, using some of it to blow apart a Venetian fleet on the Po River in 1509. With few military ambitions, he “loaned” it to the highest bidder. A big problem was standardizing cannon calibers or sizes so that ammunition could fit the available pieces. Francis I’s had 17 specific calibers, while Habsburg artillery ran to 50, a number reduced to 14 in 1552. Cannon required huge supplies of gunpowder and shot, as well as trained crews and repair supplies. Each firing had seven steps: wet-sponge the barrel, reload powder with a long “ladle,” ram down a wad of cloth or paper to hold the powder, ram down the ball, prime the touch hole that ignited the powder, aim the piece, and fire.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Manufacturing; Taxes and Public Finance; *Housing and Community:* Barbers and Surgeons; *Politics and Warfare:* Armies; Arms and Armor; Fortresses and Fortifications; Mercenaries; Navies and Naval Warfare; Soldiers; War and Civilians; War in Italy, 1494–1559; War in Italy to 1494; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Noble Pursuits; *Science and Technology:* Alchemy; Metallurgy; Ships and Shipbuilding

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FORTRESSES AND FORTIFICATIONS

Cities were at the center of Italian political and economic life. Thus they were also the goals of Renaissance-era warfare. Between 1350 and 1600 Italian cities and the fortresses that protected them evolved dramatically as the major threat against them shifted from catapults to cannon and explosives. After 1494 the enemy's militia stiffened by mercenaries was replaced by national armies—and artillery trains—of France, Spain, and the Empire. Cities—and their engineers and architects—scrambled to meet these challenges.

Fourteenth-century field armies had little effective siege artillery and preferred ravaging an enemy's countryside to besieging its capital. When Siena ordered 11 new forts built in 1371, these were to shelter rural residents rather than stop a Florentine army. Siena could defend itself. In 1377 Bologna mounted 35 cannon on its medieval walls, then an effective deterrent. Both attackers and defenders used temporary field fortifications: large wicker drums filled with earth, short timber walls, man-high shields to protect archers, trenches, and later large foxholes with walls built up from behind which to fire.

The humanist Leonbattista Alberti was the first to write about artillery-proofing city walls and fortresses in his *On Architecture*, which appeared in print only in 1485. He had written it 40 years earlier, and it remained relevant well into the next century. Alberti wrote that high medieval walls needed to be shortened and thickened, presenting a slope to the enemy that would help deflect cannonballs. Extending the base also made tunneling under walls much more difficult. Defensive cannon needed to be mounted behind and not on top of walls, firing out of relatively small gunports. Archers or gun and artillery fire needed to cover every surface of the potential battlefield. Corners of fortifications had to be extended outward to create crossfire and not built up into vulnerable towers. Picturesque crenellated stone curtains had to become squat firing platforms of shock-absorbing earth. Building new fortresses with these characteristics was expensive enough, but retrofitting older defenses was all but prohibitive. Between 1450 and 1494 small *castelli*, forts that featured some of these elements, cropped up all over Italy, but cities were slow to adapt. Beside costs, the property rights of those living near the old walls, both inside and out, had to be violated or compensated. Many believed in their older defenses, and it would take a new kind of threat to shake them. This arrived in 1494.

As his army marched through Italy, French king Charles VIII purposely used his large, concentrated artillery train to terrorize Italy. Early on his troops brutally sacked a few towns, having cracked their defenses like eggshells. In 1495 the Spanish used explosives successfully for the first time in Western Europe to blow up part of a defensive wall, at Naples's Castel Nuovo. The Italian Wars were writing

new chapters in military history. Ferrara updated its fortifications starting in 1496 and again from 1512. Corner-extending bastions appeared first at the papal town of Nettuno (1501), and papal Civitavecchia was the first town to sport a full set of bastions (1515). Here water-filled moats surrounded the walls (medieval moats were not filled) and casements or ravelins—small, encased firing platforms—jutting from long walls to provide crossfire.

Most cities refortified partially, however, or made their field fortifications outside the walls more permanent. In 1500 French and Florentine artillery breached Pisa's medieval walls, but a well-prepared interior ditch and rampart on which artillery were placed stopped repeated attacks. Venetian Verona was the first major city to have its defenses completely redesigned, by the architect Sanmichele, in the 1520s. For the Venetians the lesson had been learned when they successfully defended well-fortified Padua against 35,000 Imperial and allied troops in 1509 and again in 1513. Mercenary Captain Count Pitigliano organized the garrison, which helped prepare temporary bastions, artillery parapets, and ditches; reinforced the old walls; and flooded a moat around the city.

Ad hoc defensive features gave way to systems of deep defense, beginning with new forts along territorial frontiers. Others appeared near or overlooking cities, such as the 1534 Fortezza Bassa outside and the Belvedere fortress (1590) above Florence. In the 1540s the popes planned a ring of 18 fortresses around Rome. Only that at Porta Ardeatina was built, the remainder proving far too expensive. Elsewhere, earthworks gave way to heavy masonry, and corner bastions and random casements disappeared from planners' beautiful if impractical geometrical designs. Tellingly, Florence named Michelangelo Commissary General of Fortifications when an Imperial army laid siege from October 1529 to August 1530. A competent engineer, he proceeded to cover the bell tower of San Miniato monastery—rather inartistically—with 1,800 bales of wool, and threw up earthen ramparts around the city gates. Lucca systematically refortified itself in the 1540s. Much inside the old city walls was destroyed to create easier circulation and deepen the new ramparts. The cost in money and manpower was enormous, and the city's form was forever set, trapped inside the new defenses, with fewer gates and nowhere inside to expand.

But if newly developed defenses could keep the enemy out, they could not provide besieged people with food. In 1530 Florence surrendered after ten months, and the Medici were restored permanently to power because the people needed to eat. Though artillery made few advances, larger armies could effectively seal off a city's lifeline and wait. Lack of food and water, disease, or social breakdown weakened the resolve to resist, and in some cases the disaffected defenders simply opened a gate. Waiting for relief could work, as at Pavia in 1525, when the Imperial city was surrounded by the French under their king Francis I. The relieving

army not only broke the siege in a daring night attack, but also captured the king. Besieging armies also fell victim to effective enemy fire, low supplies, disease, low morale, desertion, and even mutiny. The common soldier put up with the boredom and danger of a siege because he expected the rewards of a sack of the city. When those expectations waned, so did his will to fight.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Construction, Building; Taxes and Public Finance; *Food and Drink*: Hunger and Famine; *Housing and Community*: Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Armies; Arms and Armor; Art, Civic; Contado and Subject Towns; Firearms and Artillery; Rebellions and Revolts; Soldiers; Urban Public Safety; War and Civilians; War in Italy, 1494–1559; War in Italy to 1494

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GUELFS AND Ghibellines AND OTHER POLITICAL FACTIONS

As every student of Dante knows, fourteenth-century Italy was divided politically between the pro-Imperial Ghibellines and the pro-papal Guelfs. These were originally German factions that found their ways south during the power struggle between the two “universal” powers that dated back to the eleventh century. Major cities and the Kingdom of Naples adopted one side or the other and aligned themselves—when convenient—as allies or enemies. The Kingdom had been part of the imperial Hohenstaufen domains, but papal, French, and Aragonese influence turned it away from Ghibelline allegiance. Florence was traditionally Guelf, but its perennial enemies Pisa, Siena, and Milan Ghibelline. Genoa was Guelf, but its countryside, which looked to Milan, was Ghibelline. But while a city may have been dominated by one party, members of its opposition could wreak havoc. Later thirteenth-century Florence famously hung between the two as Florentine Ghibellines and exiles worked with Siena against Guelf power. When war finally placed the Guelfs in control, they banished the Ghibellines. True to form, the Guelfs quickly split between the traditionalists and Dante’s party of pro-Imperialists.

When the latter were banned, Dante left Florence forever. Florence's *Parte guelfa* (Guelf Party) remained a force in local politics, headquartered in a palazzo that still stands. But like the notched crenellations that signaled a Ghibelline castle wall, the *Parte* became increasingly irrelevant.

Guelf and Ghibelline not only labeled cities but families as well. Yet late medieval and Renaissance-era urban pressure cookers hardly needed labels as excuses for families—clans really—to batter one another and cause a good deal of collateral damage. Venice famously curbed noble-class violence with its *Serrata* in 1297. Potentially fractious noble families were given full authority over the state, and each family was to be the political equal of every other. Florence, having dealt with the Ghibellines in their midst, turned against the often-violent and always arrogant “magnates.” More a loosely constructed upper class than a faction, these wealthy and powerful clans, often rooted in the agricultural countryside, were banned from all participation in the government unless they became businessmen and joined guilds. Since specific families were named, younger generations or branches of these families changed their names to set themselves apart and gain access to lucrative offices and political power. By 1400 the oligarchy that governed the Florentine Republic had split into factions as family-centered parties threatened the state and were exiled. First the venerable Alberti were humbled, then the populist upstart merchant-banker Cosimo de’Medici. In a brilliant stroke he returned, defied the oligarchs, and eventually established his supporters in all positions of authority or power. The Medici faction, led especially by Cosimo and his grandson Lorenzo, all but ruled Florence from 1434 until the inept and corrupt Piero abandoned the cause and the city in 1494.

Powerful families that had feuded when living in rural castles often maintained their animosity once they moved into Italy’s growing cities. Shakespeare’s Montagues and Capulets had nothing on the clans who built the tall towers that today grace San Gimignano near Siena, but at one time formed urban power bases in cities across northern Italy. Some were said to have bristled with a hundred or more such structures. While most had been cut down or demolished by city governments tired of clan violence, the violence itself did not subside. Troublemakers were fined or exiled, but urban discord more often led to the rise of *signore*, “lords” who either seized or were offered power within cities that sought an end to factional strife. Like dictators in Republican Rome, *podestà* (plural and singular) were given extensive powers by governments to set things right for a limited period, often six months. Some acted professionally and surrendered authority on schedule; others kept the reins as well as the peace and became lords of their cities.

Family-based factional violence sometimes broke out when external events created opportunities for the group out of power to make a play. By 1400, Pistoia had been under Florence’s control for 40 years. The Milanese attack on Florence,

however, created a distraction and an opportunity for the antagonistic Cancellieri and Panciatichi clans and their supporters to disrupt Pistoia with deadly violence. Even the countryside suffered, as villages loyal to one side were set upon by the other. In other cases strife invited intervention. Perugia's Baglioni and Oddi feud had ended with the Oddi in exile. In 1506, Pope Julius II used this as an excuse to enter the city and make peace between the families. After a Mass, oaths, and kisses—including of the pope's feet—his job was done. At the same time, Genoa was still riven by the Guelph/Ghibelline divide, as well as the feuding aristocratic Adorno and Fregoso families. Though dominated by France, in 1506 Genoa was shaken by a popular insurrection that forced the feuding parties to make peace among themselves in common cause against the commoners. In November, 1,641 members of the factions pledged oaths to stop their conflict. No less so than Abraham Lincoln, who would warn of the instability of a "house divided," did the people of Renaissance-era Italy abhor factional violence, unless their side was winning.

See also: *Family and Gender*: Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; *Virtù* and Honor; *Housing and Community*: Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare*: Art, Civic; Exile and Exiles; Rebellions and Revolts; Republics; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Executions; Sports, Contests, and Competitions; Weddings

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MERCENARIES

Mercenary captains and their professional troops were used throughout the Renaissance era by Italy's monarchs, republics, and invaders alike. Governments hired

one or more companies to fight their battles either against a specific enemy or for a set period of time. Mercenary companies provided their own weapons and ammunition and replaced their own casualties, and were far from inexpensive to hire. For a duke, pope, or king of Naples, who might not be able to trust his own subjects on campaign or in battle, and for the republic that did not want to send its own citizens or sons into a conflict, the temptation to hire professionals to do the dangerous work outweighed the risks that they would abandon or turn on their employers. Following the Ciompi Revolt of the 1370s Florence abolished its militia altogether and relied almost exclusively on mercenary forces. After 1500 the French, Spanish, and Imperial armies fighting in Italy routinely used the well-trained and relatively disciplined Swiss and German mercenary infantry to fight Italian foes as well as each other.

During the early stages of the Hundred Years' War, English, Catalan, Swiss, French, and German "free" companies of soldiers headed into wealthy Italy between battles in France. Italian knights, nobles' younger sons, and exiles also found a place in armies, at first marauding the countryside and threatening cities. Little more than well-armed gangs of thugs, they could extort huge amounts of money without firing a single arrow: between 1342 and 1399 Siena paid 291,379 florins in bribes, and between 1353 and 1389 joined nine alliances of cities determined to end the extortion. From 1364 into the 1390s English captain John Hawkwood, known to Italians as Giovanni Acuto, led a very effective and disciplined force of 10,000 to 15,000 military specialists. He gained a regular income from contracts (*condotti*) made with city governments to serve their



English mercenary captain John Hawkwood was supposed to have a sculpted monument in Florence's Cathedral, but he is instead honored there with this fresco of a statue (1436) by Paolo Uccello (1397–1475), who signed it "Work of Paulus Uciellus." Above this reads "John Hawkwood, British knight, most prudent leader of his age, and most expert in war." (DeAgostini/Getty Images)

military needs, from which for-hire *condottieri* derived their name. His only loyalty was to the contract and not to Padua, Pisa, Milan, Florence, or even the pope who hired him.

Hawkwood's generation of *condottieri* ended around 1400, but the need for hired guns did not. The 1500s saw several generations of Italian noble captains rise to prominence in the wars of Milanese, Florentine, and Venetian expansion and the perennial feuding among cities of the Romagna and Umbria. Rulers of smaller city-states became mercenaries (e.g., Sigismondo Malatesta and Federico d'Este), and mercenaries used their leverage to seize power (e.g., Francesco Sforza in Milan and Braccio di Montone in Bologna and Perugia). The Peace of Lodi (1454) required that signatories have standing armies, which in some ways served to reduce the organized violence across the peninsula.

When French king Charles VIII invaded Italy in 1494, a new era of mercenary warfare opened. The Valois rulers of France, and the Habsburgs of Spain and the Empire were now the principal paymasters, as Italian cities joined one side or the other. Often they contributed small-scale forces of mercenaries—1,000 or 1,500 men under an Italian noble—or relied on them when the royal armies turned on their cities. In these Italian Wars the far larger role was played by Swiss pikemen and flashy, sword-wielding German Landsknechts on whom both sides relied as needed. Firearms and artillery increased in use while cavalry declined, and these infantrymen had a professionalism, esprit de corps, and sense of honor that defined them. Many units even elected their own officers. The Landsknechts were especially noted for their colorful and often-outlandish slashed clothing, which in turn affected northern Italian men's fashions from the 1520s. But they were not Italian, and if betrayed, not paid, or otherwise frustrated, they could easily brutalize civilians with impunity. The Sack of Rome by German troops in 1527 resulted from just such a combination of factors; and that many of the Germans were Lutheran did not help.

Some Condottieri Memorials

Florentines wanted to honor John Hawkwood with a marble equestrian statue, but settled around 1400 for a painting of a statue by Agnolo Gaddi in its cathedral. Paolo Uccello repainted it in 1436, and in 1455 Andrea del Castagno added a similar memorial to condottiero Niccolò da Tolentino flanking it. Niccolò also features in Uccello's *Battle of San Romano* fresco in the Palazzo Medici. Padua's Gattamelata and Venice's Bartolommeo Colleoni were honored by huge equestrian statues by Donatello and Verocchio respectively, but Leonardo's enormous—and unfinished—statue commemorating Francesco Sforza in Milan crumbled with the Sforza regime itself in 1499.

Swiss troops made about twice what a laborer back home could expect, so promises of loot, bonuses, prizes, and other spoils of war were an effective recruiting tool. At first these soldiers were recruited, organized, and trained together as local groups of 6,000 men by Swiss civic authorities as defensive militias, but soon cantons were hiring them out. As the wars in Italy dragged on after 1515, however, private contractors raised bodies of men who served to fill the holes in the national armies of Valois or Habsburg. Social critics such as the religious reformer Huldrych Zwingli railed against the practice of renting Swiss sons to be slaughtered, but the Vatican's famous Swiss Guard remains a reminder of the former practice.

Early mercenaries were organized into "lances" of between four and seven men that included a knight on horseback and infantry wielding arms or firearms. While in camp a lance might share a tent, forage together for food, or pillage local civilians. A well-run camp would have adequate provisions for hygiene, and the captain would see that the employer supplied at least basic foodstuffs. In turn employers wanted the men in the field—specifically in enemy territory—earning their pay. Camp life was filled with boredom, disease, thievery, drunkenness, and infighting. Conditions were better when a unit was quartered in a small town, but the townsfolk often suffered. Later mercenaries tended to be better disciplined, and often had to take an oath to behave properly in camp and toward women. Among the Landsknechts the men rather than officers carried out disciplinary punishments, and sentences for misbehavior were immediate and harsh. Medical care also improved over time as captains did not want to lose their valuable veterans to disease or wounds.

See also: Arts: Portraits; *Economics and Work:* Taxes and Public Finance; *Fashion and Appearance:* Attire, Male; *Politics and Warfare:* Alliances and Treaties; Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Armies; Arms and Armor; Firearms and Artillery; Soldiers; War and Civilians; War in Italy, 1494–1559; War in Italy to 1494

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MONARCHIES, DUCHIES, AND MARQUISATES

Italy had essentially two types of states. One, a republic, was ruled by a changing group of citizens. The other had a single ruler: king, pope, duke, marquis, or *signore* (lord). The Kingdoms of Naples and Sicily dominated the southern third of the peninsula, while the northern and central sections were divided into republics and the Papal States and numerous duchies and marquisates. The boundaries and even labels of these states changed over time thanks to ambitious rulers and perennial wars among republics as well as lordships. The wars of other people, too, especially the Habsburg-Valois Wars (1494–1559), indelibly marked the political landscape.

For most purposes it probably mattered little whether one's ruler was a republican oligarchy, pope, king, or nobleman. If one lived in a capital city (Naples, Palermo, Rome, Ferrara, Mantua, Milan, etc.) one was a citizen of that city. Feudal lordship had never gotten the traction that it had north of the Alps, so personal allegiance to a given ruler or dynasty, or even institution (the papacy), was rarely an issue. For many in the capital who directly or indirectly served the regime, the loyalty and respect that ruler displayed was generally returned. Through most of the Renaissance era rulers had to gain at least the cooperation of their people. In 1513 Niccolò Machiavelli posed the question whether a prince should prefer to be loved or feared. Did it really matter, as long as the prince was not despised?

In the best cases, subjects took pride in their ruler. If he—occasionally she—surrounded himself with good advisors and made good laws that imposed few burdens, if he kept taxes reasonably low, and if he kept a court with a reputation for magnificence and good taste (and the list could go on), then he was likely to be respected and supported. Rulers' grand palazzi and villas surrounded by landscaped gardens were objects of pride for citizens (whose fathers probably had resented the expense) as well as the dynasty. A ruler who collected books and patronized intellectuals put himself above his peers. He was also civic minded, not limiting his cultivation of magnificence to his court but extended it to the city at large. His patronage, and that of his courtiers, reached into the churches and *piazze*, to providing public goods such as drinkable water or a new hospital. Was there really a difference between a rich republican patrician renovating a church and the duke doing so? The civic pride came from the addition to the city's magnificence.

The presence of a court in a city also meant exhibitions of passing magnificence. Court ritual and festivity played important roles in international politics. Much of it was also good for popular morale and the local economy as platoons of artisans and laborers were put to work. This was especially true of extraordinary events. Grand entrances by ducal relatives or visiting royalty whose entourages snaked their way through city streets captured attention and imaginations. The

exaggerated solemnity of noble funerals was sobering but impressive combinations of religious, dynastic, and civic rituals. Rulers celebrated military victories, treaties, or peace accords with jousts, fireworks, and other displays of martial glory. Dynastic weddings, too, were occasions that included public festivities that sometimes lasted for weeks.

Not just external displays but the ruler's personal characteristics also mattered. If he seemed to have good morals and be a man of honor, respect came more easily. Men and women of *virtù*—excellence or effectiveness—made the best leaders. If their diplomacy could not keep the state out of war, then at least the sacrifice should be small and victory should result. Few among a ruler's subjects knew him at all, so most had to rely upon rumor, gossip, and reputation. It was too easy to equate a scandal-ridden duke or viceroy (in Naples or Sicily) with a tyrant. And no one wished to be ruled by a tyrant. And no ruler sought the label. As Vicars of Christ, popes were sacred personages, but they were also among Italy's most regularly hated figures. Though respect for the office, or intimidation, kept popular resentment bottled up, it sometimes vented. Rome's citizenry routinely rioted when popes died, perhaps as a warning to the new occupant of St. Peter's Chair. As Machiavelli noted, the people were fickle and had to be handled carefully.

But carefully did not always mean gently. Some rulers established virtual police states saturated with their spies and informers who profited from uncovering threats to the regime. One reason to dazzle members of diplomatic entourages with court spectacle was to blind the observers among them to weaknesses in the society of the court or capital. These could include weaknesses in family solidarity, military defenses, supply chains, manpower, or popular support.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Courtly; Dance, Courtly; Music at Court; Theater for the Elite; *Economics and Work:* Taxes and Public Finance; *Family and Gender:* Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; *Virtù and Honor;* *Fashion and Appearance:* Court, Fashion at; *Sumptuary Laws;* *Housing and Community:* Death in the Community; Gardens; Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare:* Civic Magistracies and Offices; Contado and Subject Towns; Republics; War and Civilians; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Noble Pursuits; Weddings; *Science and Technology:* Academies; Collecting and Collections; Libraries

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NAVIES AND NAVAL WARFARE

Naval warfare proceeded throughout the Renaissance era, and advances in ship design and weaponry changed its face considerably.

Fourteenth-century galleys served as both merchant and fighting vessels in the battles for the sea between the Venetians and Genoese. Uniquely, Venetian vessels were state-owned and constructed according to standard forms at the Arsenale shipyard. These were leased for trade and armed for battle. Genoese ships were privately built, owned, and operated, making for a greater variety of vessel types. The galley had both masts for sails and oars along each side for power during calm weather or speed if pursued or for thrust in battle. By the early fifteenth century galleys typically had 16 or 20 oars with benches of two or three rowers each per side. The ship was about 42 meters in length and almost 6 meters wide. By 1500 it had gained another three meters. Fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century galleys were armed with small cannon, one at first, and more and larger versions over time. Cannonballs were made of stone, since these were lighter and used less powder per shot than iron. Small catapults and handheld and larger crossbows provided additional firepower. Genoese and Venetian crossbowmen were highly trained and valued, and Genoese later served other navies as mercenaries.

A wide variety of other ships served naval purposes on northern Italy's lakes and rivers and along the extensive Italian coast. Small five-man *barche* sped among galleys and from ship to shore; fast and maneuverable *galiots* were 29 meters in length, had a single lateen sail, a single cannon, and could carry 60 soldiers. During the 1530s Venice developed the massive 50-meter long, three-masted *galleasses* with high forecastles and ramparts, cannon mounted along the sides and at the stern, and five men per oar.

The typical sixteenth-century Tuscan galley was 41 meters long and 5.5 meters wide. It featured two masts, one near the front and the larger one about half-way down its length. Early on, 24 to 30 banks (benches) along each side sat two or three oarsmen each, for as many as 180 rowers. By mid-century, fewer huge three-man oars replaced the many light oars. On a given ship oarsmen would be a

mix of condemned criminals, Muslim slaves, captive Turks, and Christian volunteers who could be trusted to fight when necessary. Tuscan slaves were provided pants, a shirt, and a coat, and volunteers two pairs along with a red shirt and hat and socks. Christian galley slaves had shaved heads and faces, volunteers a mustache, and Muslims a tail of hair at the back. Food was sparse and hardly nutritious: 30 ounces of biscuit and water or a thin soup per day; meat and wine four times per year. Dehydration, heatstroke, sprains, blisters, exhaustion, and battle-wounds dogged even veterans, and if the ship went down, so did the slaves chained to it.

Some 50 sailors managed the ship's sails and other needs; additional crew included a barber-surgeon, secretary, chaplain, trumpeter, officers, gunners, and up to 100 soldiers—marines, really—to fight at sea or on land. Tuscan and Neapolitan galleys typically carried around 300 men. Papal ships routinely stocked supplies that included biscuit, wine, rice, oil, dry peas, salami, cheese, salt, and vinegar, much of which was for the crew, soldiers, and officers and not the rowers. When at anchor, personnel were protected by a huge awning that spanned the open deck. Galley crews sailed from sunup to just before sunset, preferring to find shelter each night.

Much naval service consisted of moving men, materiel, and horses from one point to another. Some ships were specifically designed for large cargoes, and some had rear doors for loading and offloading horses and cannon. Much action at sea pitted single ships against one another, often a naval galley running down a slower and lightly armed merchant vessel. Italian coastal patrols operated along friendly shorelines in search of marauders, and launched raids into Turkish or Barbary waters. The typical sixteenth-century galley had one large and four smaller cannon usually mounted on sleds over the bow behind the traditional six-meter-long bronze ramming spike. Crossbows and catapults had given way to firearms, but most soldiers on deck utilized spears, pikes, and swords while armored with breastplates, helmets, and shields. The essential tactic was simple: approach the enemy ship's flank, keep its complement of soldiers down with gunfire, ram it at high speed, and send soldiers and other armed men across the raised cannon platforms onto the enemy's deck. The spike, often set beneath the waterline, kept the vessels locked together, and only the attacker could pull his ship out if the tide turned or the enemy began to sink. The object was not to kill the enemy as much as to capture and enslave them.

The seizure of Constantinople in 1453 gave the Turks effective control of the eastern Mediterranean Sea. The sixteenth century saw Turkish, Spanish, Venetian, and North African ships and fleets dodging and engaging one another, and raiding each other's ports. The century's great sea battle took place at Lepanto, near Greece, in 1571. A Venetian fleet including six galleasses, Cosimo de' Medici's 12 Tuscan galleys, and a Spanish fleet—together 200 ships—crushed a Turkish force of 300 galleys. In the long run, though, the Turks won.

See also: Economics and Work: Manufacturing; Slaves and Slavery; Trade, Seaborne; *Politics and Warfare:* Alliance and Treaties; Crime and Punishments; War in Italy to 1494; *Recreation and Social Customs:* News; *Science and Technology:* Machines and Engines; Navigational Tools; Ships and Shipbuilding

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REBELLIONS AND REVOLTS

The arrogant and powerful abused, angered, and alienated their workers, peasants, subjects, and weaker neighbors. Victims responded with strikes, escape, vandalism, propaganda, theft, arson, slacking, even murder. Those aggrieved often organized locally to confront the source of their grievances. Their targets included feudal nobles, Church authorities, urban lords, landlords, civic governments or officials, dominant political factions or families, occupying military forces, royal or ducal officials, and even popes and the Queen of Naples. Chronicles and other records are filled with reports of self-organized, armed activity by rural or urban groups against their social, political, or economic superiors. Much violence was a matter of revenge—*vendetta*—or organized theft, and some was sparked by food shortages or specific perceived injustices by authorities. A true revolt, however, sought some manner of change by assault: removing a governor; overthrowing a regime; lowering taxes; opening a government to traditionally disenfranchised groups; changing a town's allegiance from one larger city or ruler to another; or weakening political power of abusive elites variously designated *magnati*, *grossi*, or *grandi*. Often the rebels' cause was framed as liberty from tyranny. Some succeeded, while others were put down more or less brutally.

Sometimes discontent was highly focused, as in Siena in the late 1360s, when six governments rose and fell. Sometimes it was widespread, as in December 1375 when 60 cities were reported as having rebelled against papal rule in parts of Umbria, Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna, and the Papal States. A chronicler in Rimini noted that 1,577 walled towns and villages and even more smaller locales had won their liberty from the Church's oppression. In Città di Castello rioters captured and hanged some papal officials and threw others out of tower windows. Perugian rebels trapped their rulers in the city's citadel, which they proceeded to bombard. Bologna's liberation in 1376 was led by feudal lords from the mountainous countryside who were tired of high taxation. Sometimes discontent and violence was endemic, as in the three valleys in Genoa's territory that regularly assaulted the ruling city between the 1380s and 1420s. In 1383 a mob headed by butchers entered the city and successfully drove out the doge (duke). Traditionally, only noblemen and some civic officials could carry actual weapons. Butchers would have been armed with knives and cleavers. During a fight among Venetian cobblers, officials found that combatants had used daggers, knives, cleavers, swords, boathooks, harpoons, and kitchen skewers as weapons.

War imposed great hardships on the home fronts, and disaffected parties used war, and especially defeats, as opportunities to rebel. Along its mountainous northern frontier very heavily taxed but strategically important Florentine villages used Milan's attack on Tuscany in the early 1400s as an opportunity to wrest economic concessions—including tax reductions and debt cancelations—from their rulers. The most heavily taxed rural nobles led military-style campaigns and rebellion spread. After three years villagers won a lightening of the tax burden, but 221 rebels were indicted. The same year, Milan's lord Giangaleazzo Visconti died while on campaign against Florence. This opened the door to rebellion by Milanese possessions. Guelf mountain men organized and invaded the Ghibelline city, committing atrocities on the terrorized population. Subject cities such as Brescia, Como, Crema, Lodi, and Piacenza threw off Milanese rule. After the defeat of Venice at Agnadello in 1509, every one of the besieged city's subject towns renounced allegiance, expelled Venetian officials and troops, and realigned themselves with the victorious Imperial forces. In Venetian-held rural Friuli, organized peasants submitted Eleven Articles in which they made demands for better market access in Venice and a fairer system of justice.

Among Renaissance-era Italy's many armed uprisings, two stand out. One is Florence's urban Ciompi Revolt of 1378 and the other Italy's largest peasant revolt, that in 1511 at Udine in Friuli. Venetian since 1420, Udine in 1511 was ruled by pro-Imperial/anti-Venetian adherents to the delle Torre family faction. Since Agnadello, this elite had further alienated the disaffected and pro-Venetian rural folk scattered among its 835 villages. An incident at Carnival resulted in a riot in Udine

that lasted two days, saw some 20 pro-delle Torre palazzi sacked, and between 25 and 50 nobles killed. Led by Antonio Savorgnan, the only Italian nobleman to lead a peasant revolt, the violence spread to the countryside. Pent-up anger and frustration led peasants to plunder and burn castles, houses, and records. In 1378 Florence's urban woolworkers, or *ciompi*, revolted. They gained three new guilds for workers and established a short-lived small artisan and worker-controlled regime until it was in turn overthrown violently in January 1383.

Banners and Flags

Banners were symbols of urban groups of all kinds: communes, neighborhoods, guilds, confraternities, and factions. They flew during civic religious and political events and at the heads of armies. Organized rebellions adopted their own, making them rallying points for followers of the cause. In the 1370s anti-papal movements gathered behind red flags with LIBERTAS (liberty) emblazoned in gold. Florence's *ciompi* rebels flew an angel carrying a sword; and in 1346 Neapolitan rioters against Queen Joanna, who had had her husband, Andrea, strangled, waved a banner featuring Andrea's head in a noose. When its designer was discovered, he was beheaded.

In 1395, armed wealthy villagers from around Puleggio marched into Ferrara demanding tax relief. They were met by troops who killed over 100. Open rebellion ensued. The government organized a reprisal force of 1,200 cavalry, 200 cross-bowmen, and infantry including Florentine troops. These soldiers killed some 600 more and captured 2,000. With the rebellion quelled, Ferrara's lord nonetheless unleashed this small army on the countryside, giving it free rein to plunder his own people—as a warning to others.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Clothmaking; Guilds; *Food and Drink:* Hunger and Famine; *Housing and Community:* Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare:* Contado and Subject Towns; Crime and Punishments; Guelfs and Ghibellines and Other Political Factions; Urban Councils and Assemblies; War and Civilians; *Primary Document:* The Attempted Assassination of Florentine Leader Lorenzo de' Medici: Niccolò Machiavelli. "The Failed Conspiracy of 1478" (1526)

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REPUBLICS

The term republic comes from two Latin words, *res* and *publica*. Together they mean literally “the public thing.” As a form of government, a republic relies on a select group of the population to make its laws and decisions. It does not have a single ruler, as does a monarchy or duchy, nor does it rely on rule by the people as a whole, as a democracy does. Renaissance-era republics were usually oligarchical, in that they had quite restricted pools from which leaders, officials, and representatives were elected. In Venice all leadership came from the class of nobles; in Florence citizenship and guild membership were required for participation. In all cases, republics barred from participation women, children, foreigners, and the propertyless. Such folk did have a voice, but that was the voice of the lobbyist or the angry mob. At most times in most republics the disfranchised were content to be ruled by their social “betters”: their fathers, husbands, employers, landlords, patrons, and creditors.

Republics emerged from the later medieval period of Italian history, when a city’s wealthy and powerful businessmen banded together to challenge the power of landed nobles and bishops. They formed communes, self-governing bodies that came to be recognized and empowered by the German emperors who technically ruled most of northern Italy from beyond the Alps. But self-rule meant decision making, and this led to factions supporting various options. These argued and fought one another—often in the streets—until most communes fell under the command of a lord, or *signore*, who brought peace at the cost of freedom of action. Others were swallowed up by more powerful neighbors, who likewise promised peace.

Venice was the oldest republic and remained one until Napoleon’s time. Venetians avoided lordship and factionalism by excluding everyone except members of



Bird's-eye view of Venice engraved by Venetian Bolognino Zaltieri (f. 1555–1576) in 1565; published in 1572 in Volume I of Braun and Hogenberg's *Civitates orbis terrarum* (Cologne). Beneath the city are depicted the doge and his councilors with a keyed list of notable places and churches. (Library of Congress)

certain noble families from political activity, and making all nobles otherwise equal in prestige (1297). So while there were plenty of conflicts in the decision-making chambers, these did not spill out into the *piazze*, since no nobleman would want the lower classes involved in *their* process. And so, Venice from the outside was *La Serenissima*, the stable and untroubled state in which all knew their places.

After Venice, the city-states of Florence, Lucca, and Siena lasted longest as republics, at least until Lucca and Siena fell to Florence, and Florence fell under the Medici dukes from 1530. Other states had republican periods, such as Milan's Ambrosian Republic. When its last Visconti duke died without a successor, an oligarchic faction controlled a popularly declared republic, which lasted from 1447 to 1450. The experiment ended in turmoil, and the Visconti heiress married the aptly named Francesco Sforza ("force"), a mercenary captain who quickly assumed the mantle of power and restored the duchy. Though Pisa preferred to be called a republic, before succumbing to Florence in 1406, it hosted a number of lords who effectively, if only for short periods, hijacked the institutions of government. Often overshadowed by Milan or the French, Genoa was a tightly controlled aristocratic oligarchy under a doge, like Venice, but it, too, had its republican periods. One

was after 1528 when the popular Admiral Andrea Doria returned from a campaign campaign, drove out a powerful French faction, and reestablished a republic oriented to the Holy Roman Empire.

For long-lasting republics, such as Siena, Florence, and Venice, the watchword was liberty. This was the freedom from outside or arbitrary authority that had been gained during the communal years. It was preserved in the institutions that provided some level of representation and autonomy. But liberty did not mean individual self-determination: this would require the Enlightenment. Republican governments could be as arbitrary and unpopular as any *signore*. Every vote for war or new taxes angered more residents than it pleased. If the ruling class understood the bigger picture, however, the measure passed and the people at large generally held their peace. One means of damping opposition was by having a head of state who at least seemed to rise above politics and stand for the common good. The Genoese and Venetian doges (dukes) were elected for life and sat as the heads of state but not of the government. The Medicis controlled Florence from 1434 to 1494 by manipulating the republic's councils and other governmental positions. They were considered like heads of a family; the dynasty's founder, Cosimo the Elder, even received the title "Father of the Fatherland."

Verses of Rome's Armless Critic Pasquino

Rome was a monarch's capital with a fierce republican tradition. From the early 1500s political and social satirists voiced criticisms and discontent through anonymous verses hung on a badly eroded human statue. Nicknamed "Pasquino," for a teacher who lived nearby, he "spoke" each feast day of St. Mark. Initially, badly written poetry was penned and posted by spirited students. Pasquino soon became a magnet for brutal invective against authorities and even popes. Pope Paul IV and his hated Carafa family, next to whose palazzo Pasquino sat, received especially vile treatment. In 1570 author Nicolò Franco was accused of having written the most biting verses and was hung by order of the Inquisition.

To the average person in the street or the fields it probably mattered little whether political decisions were made by a lord or a council consisting of oligarchs or even a broadly based citizenry. Elections to positions were never by popular vote, but rather by lot: the names of eligible men were drawn randomly from a box or bag. In theory, those elected to office always had the common good before them as they debated, voted, or acted on behalf of the republic. Of course, few really believed this. But the watchword of liberty became a battle cry that only the citizen

of a republic could rightly claim. His civic identity was not only a point of pride, but of honor, for he knew the difference between being a subject and a true citizen whose fellow citizens, however elite, directed the state.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Guilds; Taxes and Public Finance; *Family and Gender*: Families, Noble and Patrician; Heraldry; *Virtù* and Honor; *Fashion and Appearance*: Sumptuary Laws; *Housing and Community*: Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare*: Art, Civic; Citizenship; City Halls; Civic Magistracies and Offices; Guelfs and Ghibellines and Other Political Factions; Urban Councils and Assemblies; Urban Public Safety; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Civic Festivals

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SOLDIERS

There was no “the Renaissance Italian soldier.” Virtually any healthy adult male could serve, from a noble knight to a peasant militiaman. Over time, the level of military professionalization grew as weapons became more complex. Foreign companies of Breton, Catalan, German, and English freebooters, many of whom became mercenaries, roamed about northern Italy during the second half of the fourteenth century. The Italian Wars (1494–1559) saw Italy become a battleground among French, Imperial, and Spanish national armies, augmented by professional mercenary units from Switzerland and southern Germany. These men shared many common experiences and yet differed in predictable ways.

Soldiers entered military service by various paths. In early Renaissance cities, all healthy adult males were expected to serve in the militia, with wealthy, horse-owning aristocrats forming the cavalry and less affluent social classes becoming men-at-arms or archers. At the same time, those who populated the foreign-led “companies” and mercenary units were both foreign and native-born. Their ranks were filled with volunteers seeking adventure or pay and loot, or avoiding the law; prisoners given the choice of joining or punishment; and young men forced into service when spaces had to be filled after a battle. Young Germans flocked to the banners of the colorful and famous Landsknecht battalions, while young Swiss duly took their places in the civic or state militias that provided mercenaries to Valois and Habsburg commanders in Italy. Outside of urban militias the lure and promise were pay and booty. Urban militias often trained and drilled publicly, their war-games providing local spectacles of wooden weapons clashing in a *piazza*. Cities such as Genoa, Venice, and Ragusa were famous for their cross-bowmen who trained from young adulthood and served at sea as well as in military formations. Cavalry ranged from fully armored noblemen armed with several weapons and years of experience, to lightly armed and armored horsemen whose experience and training varied widely. Traditionally knights had ruled the battlefield, but by the 1490s, with new weapons such as firearms, and innovative uses of older ones, such as massing mercenary pikemen, knights lost their effectiveness and footsoldiers took their place.

For foreign formations fighting in Italy, periods between battle provided times for training and drill, and familiarizing new recruits with their weapons. Hired mercenaries were sometimes billeted in scattered small towns or villages near the employer city. More often Renaissance-era armies set up encampments with men utilizing whatever shelter they could carry or scrounge. Armies organized into “lances” of three to seven men often used the lance as the unit of camp organization, with the knight ensuring that his lower-status comrades had food and shelter. Cities usually contracted to provide food to their mercenaries, either free or at reduced costs. Typical daily rations were 1.5 pounds of bread and a pound of meat, fish, or cheese; horses required 25 pounds of fodder. National armies usually had supply trains to provide for their own men, but mercenary Swiss or Germans had to acquire what they could.

Camp life was boring, and gambling, drunkenness, and violence were widespread. It was also dangerous, as diseases from bad food, unhealthy sanitation, plague, and lack of personal hygiene spread rapidly in the crowded fields. Prostitutes routinely followed armies on campaign, and after the early 1490s that meant syphilis and other venereal diseases. Men were clothed in whatever they could manage, and identifying one’s side in a battle was often a matter of a simple badge or colored armband. Clothing was rarely changed or washed and became

comfortable homes for mites and fleas. Military leaders understood the importance of discipline on and off the battlefield, and punishments for major infractions could be fierce, including death. Desertion was very common, and an army could count on losing a quarter of its new recruits. Such men might return home or turn outlaw, using their weapons against the weak. Bands of these fearless sixteenth-century *bravi* plagued Lombardy, Piedmont, and southern Naples.

Despite attempts at discipline, professional soldiers were violent men shaped by hardship, battle, and the desire for loot. Armies in Italy campaigned year-around, and sixteenth-century battles were brutal affairs. Throughout the era soldiers were tasked with pillaging an enemy's countryside as a threat and terror weapon. Besieged cities that surrendered were nonetheless plundered; traditionally protected classes of people were slaughtered; and even prisoners often found no quarter, as at Novara in 1513. Like desertion, mutiny was a means of throwing off a repressive regime, and underpaid or undersupplied garrisons rebelled, as did the Spanish in Naples in 1501.

On the battlefield the heavily armored knight in a full suit had the best protection, and it improved with advances in steel production. The most fearsome experience was probably defending against the charge of this heavy cavalry, especially if one were in the front rank. Field fortifications, powerful crossbows, firearms and field artillery, and the Swiss and German massed pike formations were all attempts to break up or stop this juggernaut; over time they succeeded and the knight all but disappeared. Light cavalry wore much less protection, carried a shield, and relied on swiftness and maneuver, hurling javelins, shooting bows, or, later, pistols. They also carried out reconnaissance, foraged for food, and chased down fleeing enemy troops. The traditional man at arms wore heavy armor and often fought beside dismounted knights with the same polearms, swords, warhammers, and maces. Before guns and massed pikemen, these men were the battlefield's mainstay. Lighter

Siena's Virgin

Like people, cities and republics had their patron saints who protected and advanced their interests with God. On four occasions Siena's besieged government dedicated itself formally to the Virgin Mary with Masses, prayers, processions, sermons, repentance, and gifts of painted portraits. In 1260 Florence threatened and Siena won the Battle of Montaperti. An army of exiles loomed in 1483, but was stalled until 1487. In 1526 a papal/Florentine army was thwarted, and rededication to the Virgin in 1550 led to the ouster of Spanish troops but only after four years.

armed and protected soldiers supported heavy infantry, skirmished and attacked field fortifications, and protected archers and gunners. Milanese gunners wore a breastplate and steel cap and carried a sword and halberd.

A scholar once listed the reasons and ways a man left the service: death, crippling, demobilization, wandering after battle, desertion, execution, capture, or switching of sides to fight again.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Portraits; *Economics and Work*: Credit and Loans; Retail Selling; Slaves and Slavery; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Male; Facial Hair; Hair and Hairstyles; *Housing and Community*: Barbers and Surgeons; Plague; Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare*: Armies; Arms and Armor; Firearms and Artillery; Fortresses and Fortifications; Mercenaries; War and Civilians; War in Italy, 1494–1559; War in Italy to 1494; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Drunkenness; Executions; Gambling; Games and Pastimes; Sports, Contests, and Competitions; *Science and Technology*: Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Surgery

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URBAN COUNCILS AND ASSEMBLIES

Early in their history, Italian communes distinguished themselves by balancing or throwing off rule by feudal nobles or bishops that came from the nobility. Those with an economic stake in the cities' successes—artisans and merchants—banded together, sometimes through their guilds, to establish ongoing governments, or communes, that dealt with local lords, the emperor, and the rural and urban working people. They usually established a legislative council of the politically powerful to create and change laws, and a smaller one that acted as an executive that saw to the carrying out of the laws. These were never democracies but oligarchies of the wealthy, though in some cities the political base was wider than in others. Sometimes these governmental bodies were hijacked during times of civic strife

by *signori*, often military leaders, several of whom started dynasties that lasted through the Renaissance era. When Archbishop Ottone Visconti became lord of Milan in the late 1200s, he simply demoted the citizen's legislative council to his advisory council, a move also made in Mantua in 1294 by its budding *signore*. As Florence would demonstrate, Renaissance-era lords had no more use for effective civic councils than their medieval predecessors had.

Citizen councils really only had meaning in republics; in fact they were their distinguishing characteristic. Republics during the Renaissance period included Lucca, Pisa, Genoa, Florence, Siena, Rome to a degree, and Venice. Venetians had the most complex governmental system, which was deliberately so in order to maintain noble class control and avoid any factional development. And it worked. Through the Renaissance era Venice had an elected, non-hereditary doge (duke) at the helm, who was advised by a group of 16 officials. Beneath this was the Senate, which consisted of some 300 members, of whom around 230 could vote. This was presided over by the doge and his ducal council, six "chief ministers" of which served as a steering committee for the Senate. Senators served one-year terms and were often reelected time and again. The Senate deliberated and voted on all important state matters including laws, taxation, and war. Senators and all political officials were drawn from members of the Great Council, which theoretically included all noble males. In 1500, perhaps 2,500 were enrolled, with sessions including as many as 1,000 members. Their hall could fit about 1,500 men, who sat back to back on long parallel benches. Since deliberation on proposals was the Senate's duty, the Great Council had only to vote on legislation placed before it. They also elected members of some of the higher councils and conferred many offices, tried corrupt officials, and granted pardons. The Council met only on Sundays, and its chief function was voting for the Republic's many and various offices. For this purpose nominating committees of four were chosen by lot. The general assembly, which had traditionally consisted of the people at large as the sovereign power, was swamped by the expansion of the Great Council at the end of the thirteenth century. Renaissance-era Venice was a republic, but an aristocratic one. Luckily for its economy, many of the noble families were great international merchants.

Republican Florence presented a quite different picture. Here faction and infighting were common and competition for public offices fierce. To address both problems, tenures in office were extremely short. At the top of the elected executive was the Signoria made up of nine priors who sat as a group for only two months. They were advised by the Twelve Good Men (*Buonumini*) who served for three months and 16 Standardbearers (*Gonfalonieri*) who represented Florence's geographic sections and served for four. In a given year, 150 Florentines served in these positions, supported by a bureaucracy of notaries and others headed

by the chancellor, usually a distinguished humanist. The Signoria decided matters of foreign policy and presented the legislative agenda to the two large councils, those of the Commune and of the Popolo (people), a total of about 500 male citizens elected by lot for four-month terms. New laws could not originate in these councils, only with the Signoria. A vestige from communal days was the *parlamento*, in which male residents who had flooded into the Piazza della Signoria expressed their vocal approval or disapproval of a proposal. Of course, if a party controlled the entrances, it controlled the vote.

From 1434 the Medici political faction controlled much of this system by manipulating eligibility. Since “election” meant having one’s name drawn from a bag, if all eligible people were pro-Medici then so would all officeholders. In 1470, following a popular diplomatic victory, Lorenzo de’ Medici instituted a Council of 70 that essentially drained all the other groups’ authority. His followers controlled it, too. Following the Medici collapse, in 1494 Florence’s leaders reestablished a working republic with a single Great Council numbering some 3,000. In turn this was swept away by the new Medici duke’s arrangements in 1532: a 48-member Senate drawn from the new Council of 200, all of whose members were appointed by the duke.

Serving on a city’s legislative or executive councils was a burden and an honor. For example, one’s two-month term as a Florentine Prior meant being literally locked in the body’s chambers, fed by the body’s cooks, and entertained by the body’s musicians. All this was done to keep out undue influence. Other offices were less intrusive, but also less rewarding in prestige. Service was a sacrifice that every Venetian noble and every ambitious Florentine citizen was willing to make.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Taxes and Public Finance; *Fashion and Appearance:* Sumptuary Laws; *Politics and Warfare:* Alliances and Treaties; City Halls; Civic Magistracies and Offices; Contado and Subject Towns; Republics

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URBAN PUBLIC SAFETY

By the mid-fourteenth century, Italian civic governments had taken on a number of responsibilities that might be labeled public safety. These were areas that concerned the health, welfare, and property of all residents in common and were not considered benefits to individuals. The three briefly discussed here regard police, health, and building restrictions. In general, governments were willing to become increasingly coercive over time, especially in subject towns and the hinterland.

Policing city streets against criminal activity was considered to be most important at night, when much of this activity occurred. Lacking street lamps or illumination other than handheld torches, police worked literally in the dark. Night watches, consisting of trusted male residents who patrolled the better neighborhoods, operated in many cities throughout Europe. Other cities hired working or lower-class men to act as guardians of the peace day and night. In the fourteenth century, at any one time Venice had 250 to 300 such patrolmen led by noblemen. They responded to what they observed and what was reported to them. Three separate and overlapping Venetian magistracies oversaw policing, the Five of Peace, Lords of the Night, and Heads of the Wards. Crimes from treason to unlicensed gambling or prostitution often required the assistance of informers who were paid for information. The men on the streets were sometimes the assistants of judges or courts before whom the accused were brought for trial. In Venice the Lords of the Night brought charges before a three-man tribunal. If a victim or witness brought an accusation, state prosecutors investigated and if warranted took the case to The Forty, the city's major court. Aragonese Naples adopted the Spanish system of a unified system of policing, judging, and executing. Early Renaissance-era Florence relied upon neighborhood-level watches as police. It established the Eight on Public Safety in 1378, during the Ciompi Revolt, made it a permanent magistracy in 1380, and by 1400 it had joint police and judicial powers. Its police *guardia* of 18 members was active monitoring the streets and markets during the day, and at night breaking up illegal activities. Under the Medici dukes, all of this was intensified, and two official spies or informants were assigned to each of the city's geographic divisions. While public safety remained important, protecting the regime was now paramount.

In the early 1300s, protecting public health meant disposing of tainted food and trying to keep streets clean. By 1600 it meant that and monitoring the poor, vagabonds, the sick, prostitutes, and Jews; licensing medical practitioners; building plague hospitals; importing food during shortages; guarding borders against infected travelers, and a good deal more. Communal physicians were hired by the state, paid a salary, and often provided a house. They were to provide health care to all, rich or poor, without expecting payment. Of course the well-off hired their own physicians, leaving the communal doctor to deal with the poor and working classes.

Public health boards or commissions originated after the Black Death. They began as ad hoc political committees concerned with advising governments on plague prevention and control measures, and rarely included physicians. By 1500 they were emerging as permanent offices or magistracies with broad powers over ever wider concerns. Their officers oversaw or established hospitals and quarantine facilities, patrolled borders, monitored health in subject towns and the hinterland, hired plague-time surgeons and physicians, confined the sick to hospitals, expelled beggars, and tested and regulated prostitutes for illnesses. Before and during the sixteenth century, several rulers (including Sicily's from 1397 and Rome's from at least 1471) also appointed a *protomedico* or *protofisico*, an individual physician or medical board that conferred licenses on and oversaw medical practitioners. From the 1520s, Milan's had jurisdiction over physicians, surgeons, midwives, and apothecaries; set fees for services; carried out inspections; and conducted a court. They could also close markets, ban the sales of tainted foods, and close or relocate noxious industries. In Bologna (from 1517) the *protomedico* board consisted of the dean of the university's medical faculty and two professors. They likewise licensed and monitored all practitioners, especially apothecaries. They inspected imported drug ingredients and compounds, prepared the city's pharmacopeia, and set drug prices. In addition, they licensed all street vendors selling food.

In a major fire in 1304 Florence lost 1,900 houses, shops, and warehouses in the area of the Mercato Vecchio (Old Marketplace). Such experiences convinced city governments of the need for restrictions on building and buildings. Fire remained a major threat, which is why many cities insisted that new construction be of stone or brick rather than wood. Wood could also be coated in plaster, which made it relatively fire-resistant. Another response was to locate businesses that utilized fires, such as bakeries or forges, apart from other buildings. As it was, many urban dwellings did not have fireplaces or pits. In Florence and other cities masons were called out to act as firefighters, though their only method was to demolish walls to block the spread of flames. Keeping roadways and *piazze* clear of filth and garbage remained an important goal: Pistoia auctioned off the right to sweep the major market places daily and keep anything found.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; Retail Selling; *Family and Gender*: Health and Illness; *Food and Drink*: Foodsellers and Markets; *Housing and Community*: Barbers and Surgeons; City Streets and *Piazze*; Health Commissions and Boards; Physicians; Plague; Poverty and the Poor; Sewage, Sewerage, and Public Sanitation; Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; Crime and Punishments; Urban Councils and Assemblies; *Science and Technology*: Plague Treatises and Concilia

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WAR AND CIVILIANS

Apart from a few maritime and colonial wars, the conflicts fought by Renaissance Italians occurred in Italy. Between 1350 and 1494 in only a handful of instances the armies of foreign princes crossed the Alps and attacked those living along Italy's northern fringe. Most Italian wars involved Italian cities and their mercenaries. After the French invasion of 1494 Italian city-states continued to fight among themselves, but every major conflict also involved the foreign nation states of France, Spain, and/or the Holy Roman Empire. Even when non-Italian troops did most of the fighting, Italian civilians suffered terribly from the actions of friends and foes alike.

Lacking standing armies, early Renaissance cities relied at least in part on their civilian militias. The wealthy would fight on horseback, while commoners struggled on foot with bows, polearms, or new gunpowder weapons. Even when mercenary armies were engaged, they recruited among local populations, draining able

young men away from farms and urban jobs. The funds that paid the soldiers came from taxes and forced loans. Mercenaries also extorted huge bribes and demanded “gifts” of both their employers and their victims. Cities defended their walls with crossbowmen and their rural fortresses with garrisons that became regular expenses. Friendly forces needed to be housed and provided inexpensive food, and quartering troops on citizens was not unusual. In 1480 Manente Buondelmonte of Florence reported on the damage caused to his rural properties bordering rival Siena: “The mill was destroyed by our own soldiers, and all of the harvest taken. Our stores, our buildings and the land have been so badly damaged that we have lost everything we have worked for this year. . . . The parish church and all of the cottages are deserted, occupied only by soldiers who drank about 50 barrels of our wine” (Brucker, 117).

Enemy forces did far worse. Between 1342 and 1399 Siena suffered 37 serious raids by mercenary armies. Soldiers looted, robbed, raped, burned crops and buildings, and kidnapped for fun and for ransom. Ruthless captains arranged huge bribes to go away, and then unleashed their men on helpless villagers. Trade was stopped or pillaged; churches, shrines, and monasteries fell victim to sacking and destruction; on the roads merchants and pilgrims were robbed and molested. Along with plague and famine these disruptive forces depopulated small regions, reduced the supplies of farm goods, and forced prices to rise steeply.

Plunder was part of the soldier’s pay, and sacking a rich city was a soldier’s dream. Custom dictated that a besieged city that surrendered quickly would be left alone. Yet in 1376 mercenary captain John Hawkwood allowed his men to pillage, rape, and kill in Faenza, which belonged to his employer, the pope, and had surrendered and opened its gates. The problem was that the pope had not paid his hirelings. Papal Cesena was similarly treated after Breton mercenaries entered the city. Citizens murdered several hundred of the soldiers, who demanded that the citizens disarm. When they did, the Bretons went on a rampage and slaughtered between 2,500 and 8,000 civilians, according to one account.

Yet surrender could be preferable to siege. As the enemy approached, ravaging the contado, refugees gorged the city, along with citizens and soldiers assigned to protect it. Generals thought nothing of sweeping away private buildings from around city walls. Diseases could wrack the packed quarters, as hygiene deteriorated and hunger weakened people’s resistance. Ruthless defenders sometimes forced “useless mouths”—the poor and sick—out city gates, while equally ruthless attackers refused to let them pass. The victims could sit for days in the no-man’s land between armies. In January 1555, during the Spanish siege of Siena, the French commander compiled a list of 4,400 poor, useless mouths who were ejected by a squad of garrison troops. After exposure, torture, mutilation, and rape only 1,100 survived to be rescued. By April only 6,000 of 20,000 Siennese and French remained alive in the city to surrender.

During the sixteenth-century Italian Wars Swiss, Spanish, German, and French armies destroyed the countryside of northern Italy and besieged and sacked dozens of cities. As the army of French king Charles VIII marched through northern Italy in 1494, his troops spread terror by sacking Rapallo, Mordano, and Fivizzano. Horrific major episodes were the sackings of Brescia (1512; with between 6,000 and 16,000 killed, and 4,000 cartloads of booty carried away), Genoa (1522; when only looting was supposedly allowed, and even Genoese donned masks and joined in), and Rome in 1527. Here, Imperial troops, many of whom were Lutherans, conducted an orgy of destruction, looting, and killing for days as Pope Clement VII sat helpless in his castle of Sant'Angelo. The ambassador of Portugal lost 500,000 ducats, and ransoms of the wealthy and important people totaled the city's income for a year. Even the Imperial commander's mother was found and captured for ransom, while thousands of others, from cardinals to vagabonds, were brutally murdered. Other notable sieges that ended in sacks included Prato (by Spanish; 5,000 reported killed) and Ravenna (by French) in 1512, Lodi in 1516, Como in 1521, and Pavia in 1527.

Even when cities changed hands without being sacked, new garrisons treated civilians with disdain and distrust as they were billeted on their new allies. When Louis XII took control of Milan in 1499, he dispossessed many of the old nobility, giving the spoils to his French commanders. During the wars of the League of Cambrai (1509–1517), which pitted a broad coalition against Venice, Venice lost all of its mainland holdings except Treviso. In 1513 Spanish and Imperial troops along with Swiss pikemen swept through Venetian territories destroying villas and farms and burning Mestre on Venice's doorstep. As momentum changed sides, armies marched and countermarched: Vicenza and its people suffered 36 changes in regime during these eight years.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Slaves and Slavery; Taxes and Public Finance; Wages and Prices; *Fashion and Appearance:* Attire, Male; *Food and Drink:* Bread; Food Preservation; Hunger and Famine; *Housing and Community:* Plague; Poverty and the Poor; Urban Public Safety; Villages and Village Life; Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare:* Armies; Arms and Armor; Crime and Punishments; Exile and Exiles; Firearms and Artillery; Fortresses and Fortifications; Mercenaries; Rebellions and Revolts; Soldiers; War in Italy, 1494–1559; War in Italy to 1494; *Recreation and Social Customs:* News; *Science and Technology:* Diseases and Humoral Medicine

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WAR IN ITALY, 1494–1559

The march through northern and central Italy to Naples by French king Charles VIII in 1494 opened a new era in Italian political and military history. The Holy Roman emperor and the kings of France and Spain pressed claims to Milan and Naples, bullied Venice, and interfered in Florence and papal Rome. Swiss pikemen, German Landsknechts, and Spanish tercios slogged through Lombardy, Tuscany, Savoy, the Romagna, Veneto, and Campagna disrupting rural life, while artillery made no fortified refuge secure. Renaissance Italy became a battlefield.

In spring 1494 French king Charles VIII descended into Italy with an army of around 30,000 men and the largest train of artillery ever seen in Italy. His target was Naples and its kingdom, to which the French had dynastic claims. By sacking smaller cities he terrorized the populace and cowed Florence and the papacy into submission. Neapolitan resistance collapsed quickly in spring 1495, and Charles entered formally on May 12. He left one week later having never been crowned. Famously the new disease (later) called syphilis ravaged his men, and a Spanish/Italian league threatened Charles's position. His retreating army of 10,000 was attacked at Fornovo on July 6 by 25,000 league troops, though most managed to escape. Florence used the confusion to besiege French-garrisoned Pisa, but support from Milan, Venice, and some Spanish forces ended the threat in 1499.

Meanwhile, Emperor Maximilian entered the fray, only to be beaten near Livorno in 1496. Florence and Venice supported French king Louis XII in 1499 when he pressed dynastic claims on Milan, and their 40,000 men dispatched Sforza's 23,000 Swiss and German mercenaries and peasant levy. Pope Alexander VI's son Cesare Borgia took advantage of this disruption to seize Forlì, Imola, Pesaro, Piombino, and Rimini on his own behalf. Louis next negotiated with Ferdinand of Spain to share control of Naples (1501), but Ferdinand reneged and French and Spanish armies clashed at Cerignola in April 1503. Spain henceforth controlled Renaissance Naples, establishing a resident viceroy in 1507.

In 1509 Florence successfully—and finally—seized Pisa. Venice, which had beaten back some Imperial assaults, braced as the League of Cambrai (emperor, pope, kings of France and Spain, Ferrara and Mantua) began an eight-year-long conflict. At Agnadello 33,000 Venetians and mercenaries suffered defeat by the French, but the league broke up in 1510 as pope and the Spanish turned on the

French and the pope unsuccessfully attacked Ferrara. Louis struck back in 1511, taking Bologna and sacking Brescia (February 1512), and defeating a Spanish-Papal army outside Ravenna (12,000 dead) with the help of Ferrara's excellent artillery. A Venetian offensive bolstered by Swiss pikemen drove the French out of not only Venetian territory but Milan as well. A Sforza was back in Milan; briefly and with Spanish support a Medici ruled in Florence after 18 years.

The French returned to Milan the following year but were defeated by Swiss mercenaries outside Novara. Maximilian and Ferdinand joined forces against Venice and ravaged the Veneto and Friuli for two years. In 1515 the French returned to Milan, now led by young Francis I. The French victory over Swiss mercenaries at Marignano left over 15,000 dead and marked the decline of Swiss military reputation. An Imperial and Swiss army tried in 1516 to retake Milan, but failed. Young Charles V Habsburg became king of Spain and also emperor-elect in 1519 and, with Florentine and papal help, pushed the French from Lombardy in 1521, easily capturing Milan. A Swiss-reinforced French army returned in 1522 and was beaten at Bicocca near Milan. Imperial units celebrated by besieging and sacking French ally Genoa. Francis invaded again in 1523, but his 38,000-man army was checked by the Germans and disintegrated. Another army of 46,000 French and mercenaries led by Francis poured into Lombardy in 1524, seized plague-stricken Milan, and turned south to lay siege to Habsburg-held Pavia. The city's excellent defenses withstood the French from October to February 1525. The French kept an Imperial relieving force at bay until February 24. A bold early morning assault in fog surprised the French. By 9:00 AM the besiegers had lost 10,000 men including their cavalry, field commanders, and king, who was captured and taken to Madrid. Despite swearing off claims to Italy (Treaty of Madrid, 1526), once released Francis again invaded Lombardy, sacking Pavia in 1527 and Genoa in 1528. Imperial troops who had marched on and sacked Rome in 1527 received reinforcements and chased the French from Lombardy in 1528. A second French army of 20,000 captured Apulia and besieged Naples from April to August 1528. Wracked by disease and lacking money and supplies, 3,000 surrendered and 4,000 deserted and wandered away. With both powers exhausted, in 1529 they signed the Treaty of Cambrai. Charles then turned on French ally Florence, besieging but causing little damage to the city.

Francis remained obsessed with Milan, but his successes were limited to Savoy and Piedmont after an invasion in 1536. French victory at Ceresole in 1544 and the Peace of Crépy (1544) consolidated the French presence, and Charles presented Milan to his son Philip (II). The early 1550s saw a good deal of skirmishing and destruction in northwestern Italy and French support for a revolt by Siena against the Spanish. By 1555 Siena surrendered and was presented to Tuscan grand duke Cosimo I de' Medici. French thrusts at Naples and Lombardy were thwarted, and

in 1559 French king Henri II instigated the Treaty of Cateau-Cambr sis that concluded the Habsburg-Valois Wars in Italy and elsewhere. Philip II had ruled in Naples and Milan from 1555 and now cast a shadow across Tuscany and the Papal States. Venice remained a republic, and exhausted France retained some cities in Piedmont.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Construction, Building; Taxes and Public Finance; *Food and Drink*: Hunger and Famine; *Housing and Community*: Poverty and the Poor; Violence within the Household and Community; *Politics and Warfare*: Alliances and Treaties; Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Armies; Arms and Armor; Contado and Subject Towns; Crime and Punishments; Exile and Exiles; Firearms and Artillery; Fortresses and Fortifications; Mercenaries; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; Navies and Naval Warfare; Rebellions and Revolts; Soldiers; War and Civilians; War in Italy to 1494; *Recreation and Social Customs*: News; *Science and Technology*: Ships and Shipbuilding

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WAR IN ITALY TO 1494

Northern and central Italy's political organization into a patchwork of larger and smaller cities and city-states ensured that the medieval pattern of economic and military rivalry would continue throughout the Renaissance era. Until 1494, when French king Charles VIII marched his huge army to Naples, non-Italian national military intervention was limited in scope and effect. Milan, Florence, and Venice fought to expand their control over neighbors; popes struggled to maintain their Papal States; and Naples suffered feudal-style wars of royal dynasty versus barons. During the later 1300s all were affected by roaming mercenary armies, led by foreigners such as Englishman John Hawkwood and German Albert Sterz but filled with Italians and non-Italians alike.

Between 1350 and 1375 the Visconti dukes of Milan fought four wars for control of independent Bologna, while supporting Pisa in fending off Florentine ambitions. Captain John Hawkwood, on hiatus from the Hundred Years War's campaigns, rented his highly effective force to the Pisans and Milanese in 1363–1364 against Florence and helped Milan defeat papal forces in 1370. He changed sides in 1371, fighting alongside Naples and a papal army against Milan, until the pope, in Avignon, proved late in paying in 1375. In summer of 1375 Hawkwood unleashed his army of English, Germans, and Italians on Tuscany. Florence, Lucca, and Pisa paid huge amounts to keep their cities secure, but Siena and Arezzo were ravaged when they did not. When unemployed the companies often turned to extortion and violence on a grand scale. When the War of the Eight Saints broke out still later in 1375, Hawkwood's army joined papal forces against a grand coalition of Milan, Naples, Florence, and much of Tuscany. In this case the Romagna hosted the combatants for two long years. As was usually the case, actual set battles were few and armies were maneuvered about like chess pieces, threatening here and blocking there. While some of each city's army were native soldiers, most were professional mercenaries whose leaders were loath to lose experienced (and valuable) men.

The maritime commercial cities of Venice and Genoa clashed at sea in the War of Chioggia (1378–1381), which saw Venice cripple and gain supremacy over its old rival. The era of the papal schism (1378–1417) pitted Roman pope against Avignonese antipope, who sought leverage by supporting the royal or baronial sides in the Kingdom of Naples, which bordered the Papal States. During the late 1380s and 1390s, Giangaleazzo Visconti expanded the Milanese state by conquest. In battle and by double-dealing Milan seized Verona, Vicenza, and Padua in 1388. Florence girded for war, but Milan distracted it by supporting Tuscan rival Siena in 1390. Soon Milan had also allied with the lords of Ferrara, Mantua, Rimini, and Perugia against Florence, Bologna, Faenza, and Padua, which had been seized from the Milanese. In 1391, after beating back Hawkwood (now Florence's tool) the Milanese slaughtered invading French forces at Alessandria. Visconti's fortunes turned late in the decade, however, and Florence stood alone against the juggernaut from Lombardy. Steeled for the inevitable invasion and viewing itself as David against the northern Goliath, the Florentines sighed relief when Giangaleazzo died suddenly in 1402 only miles from the city. The Tuscan city regained regional hegemony, and Venice was soon carving out an Italian state, the *Terraferma*, at Milan's expense.

The early decades of the fifteenth century saw the old foreign mercenary captains die off to be replaced by the for-hire soldiers of Mantua, Ferrara, and other small lordships. Wars, sometimes involving impressive sounding alliances, were usually affairs of single sieges or battles in which one of the increasingly consolidated states of Milan, Florence, Venice, or the Papal States nibbled at the border areas of its neighbor. Military leaders such as Braccio Fortebraccio made

themselves *signori*—lords—of sometime-independent cities in the interstices. Braccio seized Bologna with his private army and ruled briefly as its lord. He then sold the city to its own citizens and set his sights on Perugia, which was ruled by Carlo Malatesta. On a hot summer day in 1416 Malatesta brought his army out to San Egidio near Braccio's position. Weakened by heat and the march the Perugians broke rank and ran for water, at which point Braccio's men fell on them, capturing far more than they killed or wounded. In an attempt to limit the hemorrhaging of money for armies and conflicts Italy's main powers signed the Peace of Lodi in 1454, an initiative of Cosimo de' Medici and the pope. While never preventing wars, it did serve as a braking device, and at least Florence kept its standing army limited in size. Other Italian armies grew larger, became better armed and more devastating as they chose economic targets for seizure or destruction.

Before 1494 foreign invasions of Italy were generally minor affairs. In the later fourteenth century Imperial armies descended briefly into Lombardy in 1355 and 1363. Hungarians crossed the Dolomites and were met in Friuli by Venetian armies. In Sicily French and Aragonese forces dueled as they would later in Naples. In 1401 Imperial troops clashed with Milanese at Brescia; Hungarians fought in Venice's northern territories in 1411 and 1418; and in 1422 a Swiss army was defeated at Arbedo while trying to carve out a toehold in Lombardy. Freed from the Hundred Years' War the French sent armies against Milan in 1447 and 1449, and an alliance of Milan and Genoa staved off a French invasion in 1461. Increasingly formidable Swiss forces defeated the Milanese in 1478, and the Milanese returned the favor in 1487. In the same year Venetians checked an Austrian invasion at Calliano. Turkish forces had been extending their control over the Balkans and Hungary, especially after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Their growing sea power threatened Sicily and the Neapolitan Kingdom, and from the 1460s their armies harassed Venetian Friuli.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Taxes and Public Finance; Trade, Seaborne; *Food and Drink:* Hunger and Famine; *Housing and Community:* Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare:* Alliances and Treaties; Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Armies; Arms and Armor; Contado and Subject Towns; Crime and Punishments; Exile and Exiles; Firearms and Artillery; Fortifications; Guelfs and Ghibellines and Other Political Factions; Mercenaries; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; Rebellions and Revolts; Republics; Soldiers; War and Civilians; War in Italy, 1494–1559; *Recreation and Social Customs:* News; *Science and Technology:* Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Ships and Shipbuilding

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RECREATION AND SOCIAL CUSTOMS



INTRODUCTION

One person's agonizing sermon is another's entertainment for the day. To battle in armor for control of a bridge is what soldiers did for a living, and what Venetian men did as recreation; and both fought with similar fervor. Is an orally transmitted story a folktale and when written down literature? When is a favorite hunting dog or horse a pet rather than a tool? The label "recreation" seems to suggest that certain activities were not necessary to life, but optional or meant for leisure time. Customs are ways of doing or thinking that do not take much thought, but that proceed from a kind of cultural reflex we grow up with or acquire after years of living in a certain place. Neither laws nor common sense dictates which side of a stairway we ascend, but in the United States it is custom that dictates it is on the right.

Much of what constituted recreation, at least in this present context, was publicly engaged in. Though the enjoyment of erotica may have been more intimate, even members of the sex trade were very public figures whose persons were their own advertising. How very different this is from our modern culture, which is ever more personalized and solitary as we hear through earbuds and watch screens reduced to a few square inches. We exercise alone, eat alone, travel alone, gamble sitting alone in front of a computer or slot machine, and even worship alone in front of the TV or Internet evangelist. This style of non-interaction would have been as strange to a Renaissance-era Italian as flying in an airplane or skyping.

As understood in this section, much recreational activity was customary, such as the celebration of saints' days or Carnival. Religious theater grew organically from the Catholic liturgy and the natural inclination to take part oneself. Popular theater emerged from raw extemporaneous street performances into managed improvisation and eventually into scripted comedy. Popular songs of love or scandal would have been passed down, perhaps over generations, never needing a "folk



The armed figures to the right are bringing a convicted criminal to the base of the column for execution of his sentence, as judicial officials look on. Fresco of the Piazza of the Old Market (Mercato Vecchio; 1561/2) in Florence by Flemish painter Giovanni Stradano (Jan van der Straet; 1523–1605) in Room of Gualdrada of Florence's Palazzo Vecchio. (DeAgostini/Getty Images)

revival.” Many games and sports, too, were activities pursued since time immemorial, even if some Renaissance-era expert decided to publish manuals on them.

It is instructive to reflect on the extent to which writing and printing encroached on leisure and recreational activities. News, which had galloped along with gossip, was now submitted to writing and circulated well out of earshot. Women chose to compose letters on matters of actual or feigned importance not just for one recipient, but for as large an audience as her book might reach. Writers published guides to proper behaviors from dining to fencing, and at least among the literate classes there emerged boundaries, rules, and procedures. Local or regional variations were ridiculed as backward or simply disappeared.

Of course, print was important in beginning a slow process of homogenization, but could be nothing like television or the Internet as an agent of popular change. Literacy was still very low in the countryside and mountains, and in the south and Sicily. And it is in these regions, often considered backward by urban elites, that truly ancient customs remained intact. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries historians labored to collect folksongs, tales, sayings, dances, beliefs, and other cultural artifacts from Italian “peasants” in an early form of cultural anthropology. As a result, much was preserved. Whether any was as old as our period is another matter.

Nonetheless, the modern student of Renaissance-era customs, pastimes, and entertainments has a great supply of sources with which to work. Personal records such as letters, *ricordanze*, accounts, diaries, and chronicles contain much descriptive material on what the writer actually saw or did and expected to see or do. Accounts of festivals and singular events were published and collected at the time and provide valuable, if often biased, descriptions. Recorded preachers’ sermons and moralistic writings provide heavily biased views of certain behaviors that nonetheless represent one side of the battle for people’s hearts. Some Italians preserved printed song lyrics, or ditties and stories that caught people’s ears in streets and *piazze*. Antique game boards and pieces, sporting equipment, weapons, children’s toys, and gambling apparatus still exist, allowing one actually to touch what touched the leisure lives of the past. Prints and paintings, too, can put one in the midst of a grand procession or a courtesan’s chamber. Pornographic books, dramatic scripts, news reports, and literary epistles have survived to be read and studied. Novelle, dialogues, poems, and other literary works captured activities, turns of phrase, and beliefs that broaden our knowledge. And public documents of all sorts shed light on the myriad activities in which people took part. Statutes, court records, warnings, assembly deliberations, and the like indicate how authorities reacted to the things people did. Many sought to limit or ban certain behaviors; and one can be sure that the more often the bans were repeated, the more ingrained in the people the behaviors were.

CALENDARS: SACRED AND PROFANE

A calendar year marks the passage of time the earth moves around the sun from point A back to point A. As with a circle there is no geometric beginning point. Any such accepted by humans is necessarily arbitrary. But the earth also rotates on its axis 365 times in the course of a given year, producing 365 cycles of exposure of a given spot on earth to the sun, or days. Because the earth’s axis itself rotates,

the length of exposure varies slightly each day. Beginning at the winter solstice the period of light during a day increases in the Northern Hemisphere until the summer solstice, after which daylight begins to shorten with each day. Twice a year, at the spring and fall equinoxes, daytime and nighttime are each exactly half of the day.

Ancient astrologers imagined that the stars in their apparent constellations rotated around the earth in a band, and they mapped 12 stellar regions, or zodiac houses, to which the earth was exposed sequentially each year. Renaissance-era people accepted that zodiac houses had influence on human activity and health, and acted accordingly. Finally, the 12-fold division of the year was corroborated by the regular changes of the phases of the moon, a full cycle of which takes about 28 days. These natural solar, stellar, and lunar cycles formed the bases for the Roman, astrological, and Jewish calendars, respectively. Italian Renaissance-era time relied on elements of each.

The solar cycle profoundly affected agricultural activity. After warming for three or four months after the winter solstice, the earth was ready for seeds that would produce food during the summer and harvest period of autumn. Spring also produced the young of domestic animals, some of which would also be harvested in the fall. Human agricultural activity shifted into gear and about half the year was dedicated to food production. During the following six months food stores were consumed, and spring started the cycle anew. This agricultural cycle directly governed the lives of most people in Italy during the Renaissance era.

It indirectly affected everyone through the Catholic Church's creation and imposition of the liturgical year, a cycle of days and weeks dedicated to spiritual activities and commemorations of important events in Christian history. Borrowing Roman weeks and months, the year could be said to begin on March 25 with the Annunciation of Gabriel to Mary that she would carry the Christ; nine months later fell Christmas. Christmas was preceded by four weeks of spiritual preparation known as Advent. Soon after came related feast days commemorating Jesus's circumcision (January 1), Epiphany to the Wise Men (January 6), and Purification of Mary after her labor (February 2).

The next major Church cycle was based on the Jewish lunar calendar, and thus moved around within the regular solar cycle of determined months. Ash Wednesday—a moveable feast—begins 40 days (46 including Sundays) of Lent, an intense period of repentance, fasting and other self-sacrifice, and somber reflection in preparation for the commemoration of Jesus's suffering and death during Holy Week and resurrection on Easter Sunday morning. But Lent had to be prepared for as well. The day before Ash Wednesday was designated Fat Tuesday, on which all household meat products, which Christians were to shun during Lent, were consumed in a festival known as Carnival. By the Renaissance era this had been extended backward, so that Venice's Carnival season began on December 26.

Celebrated throughout Italy, Carnival was a bridge between the joyous Christmas season and belt-tightening Lent. Holy Week began by recalling Jesus's entry into Jerusalem. Special ceremonies on Holy Thursday commemorated the Last Supper and Eucharist's establishment, while Good Friday focused on Jesus's Passion and Crucifixion. Easter could fall from later March to mid-April, and Ascension Thursday—a feast especially important in Venice—followed 40 days later. Christians prepared for major feast days with prayers and rituals on the evening before, or vigil, of the day.

Dating New Year's Day

Julius Caesar, sponsor of the Julian calendar, named the first of January—the gateway month named for two-faced god Janus—each year's first day. Early Christians, however, considered the day dedicated to Christ's conception, the Annunciation, to be more important. So, through much of the Middle Ages March 25, exactly nine months before Christmas, was New Year's Day. But the lunar calendar and solar year had drifted apart. Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 established the Gregorian calendar, making January 1 New Year's once again. Caesar lost his calendar but regained his New Year's date.

In a year's course several additional feast days celebrated Mary, and various saints had days dedicated to them. Some were Church-wide, while others had significance only for regions or even villages. Cities celebrated their patron saints' days: Florence St. John the Baptist on June 24, Venice St. Mark on April 25, Rome Sts. Peter and Paul on June 29, and Bari St. Nicholas on December 6. Bishops published official diocese-specific calendars, and religious orders' calendars highlighted their own saints. Individuals celebrated their name-saint's feast: Prato merchant Francesco Datini presented gifts to the local convent of San Francesco on each feast of St. Francis (October 12), and the brothers came to expect them; and Lorenzo de' Medici celebrated St. Lawrence's day, August 10, at San Lorenzo church in Florence.

Families might mark death dates of important ancestors; confraternities, guilds, and parishes celebrated the feast days of their respective patron saints, as did neighborhoods and entire city quarters. Civic calendars featured elections, tax due dates, and patriotic commemorations. But calendars of recurring festivals drew the most attention, often combining ceremonial elements of Church and state. Venice had the most developed of these calendars. Four annual feasts celebrated St. Mark's relation to Venice; while other civic patron saints included George, Theodore, Nicholas of Bari, and the Virgin Mary with her several feast

days. March 25 marked the Annunciation and the city's founding; Venetians celebrated three fourteenth-century naval victories on the respective days of Saints Martial, Mary Magdalen, and John the Baptist. On Ascension Thursday the doge famously "married" the sea, opening the year's seafaring season.

But what date was New Years? In Bologna, December 25; Rome, January 1; Florence and Siena, March 25; and in Venice, January 1 for non-Venetian matters and March 1 for domestic documents, unless made by notaries, who turned the page on March 25.

See also: *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Foreign Communities; Neighborhood and Parish; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Church Festivals and Processions; *Religion and Beliefs*: Confraternities; Jews and Judaism; Mary, Cult of; Saints and Their Cults; *Science and Technology*: Astrology; Astronomy before Copernicus

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CARNIVAL

Carnival was an excuse; it was an excuse for the poor to pretend to be rich, and the powerless to act as the authority. On the Church calendar, Carnival was a length of festival time, differing by region, that led up to the liturgical season of Lent, which began on Ash Wednesday, which fell between early February and mid-March. Lent was a period of serious spiritual reflection, sacrifice, and repentance; Carnival was to be its opposite. The world turned upside down; a safety valve; the world gone mad. It was an excuse for transvestitism, for hiding one's identity behind masks, for degrading practical jokes and cruelty to animals. Mild sadism replaced Christian charity, gorging and drunkenness the sobriety of repentance, and silly competitions the unified Body of Christ. Christians played pagans, fools pretended to be wise, and prostitutes imitated grand ladies. Cities suspended sumptuary laws, allowing anyone to dress outside his or her social station, and encouraging the wealthy to flaunt their gaudy jewels and extravagant attire. Street fairs, raucous parades, and

staged street races and battles occupied everyone, while come evening, bonfires attracted commoners but balls and banquets kept the elites warm inside. While Carnival was an excuse for license, elements of Carnival reinforced the status quo. In Rome in 1580 parading artisans chanted “Eat the rich!” whereupon the unamused rich massacred the procession.

Venice took Carnival most seriously. It began immediately after Christmas (in Florence 12 days later), and the government sponsored much of the entertainment. When Venice’s university in Padua announced it would continue teaching during Carnival, incensed students rioted, smashed furniture, and assaulted anyone agreeing. Carnival seemed especially suited to the young, whose fluid senses of identity slipped into the other sex’s clothing and behind feature-obscuring masks. Wealthy young men who belonged to various Venetian Companies of the Stocking social groups sponsored satiric or transgressional public skits, comic plays, and other street performances, entertaining themselves at banquets and drinking parties. Venice’s guilds and city quarters organized festivities including dances, firework displays, contests, masquerades, comedies, and even Church-mimicking processions complete with floats. Groups of men from opposing halves of the city met to battle each other for symbolic control of various bridges across the canals. Over time, sticks and armor gave way to fists, knees, and head-butts, but the confrontations continued. These “wars of the fists” occurred throughout the year, but during Carnival time they drew the largest crowds. Each year Carnival-related deaths occurred, with causes from the bridge battles to accidents to opportunistic murders by masked revelers. On one night in the late sixteenth century 17 deaths were reported. Finally, on Fat Tuesday morning, pigs and a bull were dropped into the midst of a small crowd whose members sought to control the unfortunate beasts and decapitate them for the audience. In 1525 this ritual ended: even Carnival had its limits.

By the mid-sixteenth century, in many ways Rome had succeeded Venice as Italy’s center of civic festivities, especially Carnival. The pre-Lenten binge began in January and contained many of the same elements as the Venetian version. Streets and *piazze* hosted tables filled with food; wine flowed; music prompted dancing; drinkers drank and gamblers gambled. In Rome, and elsewhere, palios or horseraces coursed through the city as crowds filled side streets, *piazze*, and palazzo windows. Other races pitted bulls against people and each other. Villages around Rome had to provide food and animals for partiers as a sign of their submission to the papal city. Rome’s Jewish community provided boys and old men who were stripped down and raced the same course as the horses. Stones and gobs of mud flew from onlookers as the Jews made their way past. Though contemporary documents suggest that Jews even enjoyed this apparent degradation, it was part of the price they paid for living in Rome. Other competitions included “sea” battles

on the Tiber, jousting by young noblemen, mock battles atop Monte Testaccio, Spanish-style bullfights, and organized matches of *calcio*, a ball game similar to rugby. More to the taste of aristocrats was the classically themed *Festa* in Piazza Navona that featured elegant floats and processions bedecked in ancient Roman garb. But even such dignified displays could not damp criticisms of the cruder and even pagan aspects of the revelries.

Sixteenth-century Catholic reformers, such as Milanese archbishop and cardinal Carlo Borromeo, barred plays during Carnival in Milan. He found the traditions barbarous, blasphemous, sacrilegious, and scandalous; they were hotbeds of drunkenness, gluttony, violence, and lewd behavior; and masquerading obscured people's proper identities. Carnival was a waste of precious time and money and taught children a bad lesson, while corrupting adults' proper attention to their Lenten duties. In the spirit of the Council of Trent some local authorities around Italy ended especially egregious practices.

Lent

The 40-day (actually 46) Lenten period leading to Easter recalls the Hebrews' 40 years in the desert and Jesus's 40 days spent in the desert before beginning his ministry. It was time for reflection, penance, and change of life. Cities as well as the Church banned many amenities of life. Florentines avoided meat, cheese, eggs, and wine; and were encouraged to avoid sex. Studies show birth rates actually fell nine months later. Both weddings and brothels were suspended during Lent, but public preaching took on a fiercer attitude as the only light seemed to come from threatened hellfire.

Decades before Borromeo, Florence's Dominican reformer Girolamo Savonarola advanced similar criticisms of his city's practices in the 1490s. The commune and Medici elites sponsored much that constituted Carnival, and even Lorenzo de' Medici wrote poetry and songs appropriate to the twisted season. Food, wine, music, dancing, fireworks, jousting, palios (horse races), *calcio* matches and other diversions abounded, but in Florence these were often organized by "brigades" of a dozen or so men. Their festival "lords" fed them and provided livery to distinguish the group as it alternately hosted and competed in events, including staged street brawls. But even from the later fourteenth century it seems that Carnival became more a season of the Florentine elite, while popular attention went to other religious festivals such as St. John's Day (June 24).

See also: *Fashion and Appearance:* Livery; *Food and Drink:* Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and Piazza; *Recreation and Social*

Customs: Calendars: Sacred and Profane; Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; Drunkenness; Gambling; Music and Dance in Popular Culture; Songs and Singing, Popular; Sports, Contests, and Competitions; Street Entertainment; Theater, Popular; Theater, Religious

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CHILDREN'S TOYS AND GAMES

In 1560, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, a famous Netherlandish artist, painted a wonderfully detailed depiction of scores of contemporary children's games. The bird's-eye view shows children in an urban setting rolling hoops, throwing and kicking balls, running races, and playing keep away. Hobby horses, dolls, spinning tops, dice, game boards, and tin drums and bugles appear. This very un-Italian painting could be a celebration of the creativity and joy of childhood, or it might have been viewed as a moral commentary on the foolishness of wasting time. Despite their interest in painting, drawing, and sculpting, Italian artists rarely celebrated childhood, and never did so as comprehensively as Bruegel did. Children appear rather as appendages of portrayed parents, not as active agents. Occasionally they are glimpsed in domestic backgrounds with a nanny or scooting along in a donut-shaped wheeled walker. Playthings—other than certain dolls—rarely appear in inventories or other accounts. Only flashes in sermons, prescriptive literature, paintings, and a handful of actual objects survive.

Because of the evolutionary nature of childhood, the appropriateness of toys and games has always changed with a child's age. As the infant's faculties develop, he or she is drawn to noises and shiny objects. The Christ Child is often shown grabbing with stubby fingers for such an object or animal. The object is probably symbolic, often of His eventual death, but the impulse is pure human child. A silver-plated baby's rattle survives, as do small, shiny bells that may have been

hung over an infant's crib or cradle. Whirligigs that spun when blown on are known, as are spoons with bells attached. With increasing mobility came motion and discovery. Walkers, rocking horses, and stick horses respected this new phase, and were probably passed down among siblings or neighbors.

A major part of ego development was gender identity, and this was reinforced throughout the pre-pubescent years. The most useful toys, advice-givers agreed, were miniature versions of adult tools. Wooden versions of cookware, tableware, and furniture were appropriate for girls, while a father's occupational tools in miniature could begin the maturation process of young boys. Slightly older girls might mimic mother with a small spinning wheel or toy distaff. Girls were given dolls of all kinds to foster maternal instincts. Dolls seem to have ranged from small to life-sized, and in form abstract to moderately realistic. They were made of cloth, stucco, wood, even terra-cotta. Dressing dolls and changing their clothes was all part of play. Known examples had rigid limbs, but evidence suggests at least some had articulated limbs—certainly something technically feasible. It is thought that rigid dolls came pre-dressed, or perhaps these were infant dolls that would have been wrapped in swaddling or a back-tied shift. Moveable limbs would have made dressing and undressing much easier. Well-dressed child dolls appear in bridal trousseaux and accompanied young women into nunneries. Some clearly have religious connotations. The Christ Child is one form, as are several female saints in doll form. Mothers seem to have passed such dolls to their daughters, perhaps as fertility objects.

Boys' gendered horizons could also be broadened with toy versions of fire-arms, swords, lances, and bows and arrows. Urban fathers often belonged to the civic militia and drilled with real weapons, providing a clear path for imitation to follow. There are also indications that boys played with wooden versions of carts and boats. Both might be wheeled and pulled along by a string, or a boat made to float in a local pond or stream. Of course, imagination being what it always has been, a broom easily became a horse, a bucket a helmet, and a stick an enchanted sword. A different bit of imitative play was recommended by the Dominican preacher Giovanni Dominici. He suggested that parents set up in a corner of the home a miniature chapel, complete with small altar and objects for mimicking the Mass. Only boys could play the priest or deacon, of course. On a side note, both this encyclopedia's Catholic author and, as it happened, his father did the same thing when young.

As girls grew in age, they were usually encouraged to remain around the house, for protection and to help mother. Urban boys, on the other hand, were notoriously sociable. Playing with other boys and young men they would work off excess energy with races, chases, wrestling, swimming, fighting, thieving, vandalism, and a hundred other unmonitored activities.

Ungendered diversions for young children included musical items in miniature and game boards. Drums, finger cymbals, and tambourines made noise and helped developed rhythm. Tin bugles and small flutes or pipes instilled a musical sense in imitation of the communal and other omnipresent musicians. As dexterity improved, fingers grew, and if a family could afford it, the child was introduced to the keyboard. As girls and boys were generally discouraged from mixing, even before puberty, board games were one way of structuring growing children's interactions. Nannies, parents, or older siblings taught the rudiments of increasingly complex games from checkers to backgammon to chess.

Watching parents and other adults read and read from books should have stimulated a similar interest in children. Helpful writers recommended cutting anything from fruit slices or cookies to wooden blocks into letter shapes to begin the process. With printing, books aimed at young readers came off the presses. Alphabets and simple grammars introduced fundamental concepts. Heavily illustrated psalters were meant to delight, teach reading, and encourage piety, though not usually in that order.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Musical Instruments; *Family and Gender*: Childhood; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Children; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Games and Pastimes; Noble Pursuits; Sports, Contests, and Competitions

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CHURCH FESTIVALS AND PROCESSIONS

Christianity is a religion that expresses its values in communal rituals, some of which are considered especially important and are called sacraments. Singular experiences of the sacraments such as baptism, a child's first communion, confirmation, marriage, and priestly ordination were celebrated by the whole family within

the local or parish community. The general uniformity of at least nominal adherence to the Catholic Church meant that parish and village or neighborhood was often identical, and that most of an entire city's population shared religious identity. Families, parishes, city quarters, and entire cities celebrated many religious feast days or holidays (holy days) as communities. Rituals, ranging from a feast following a baptism to a city-wide procession by clergy, confraternities, guilds, magistrates, and others, were participated in to create, celebrate, and display the community's religious solidarity. Like many rituals, these had several audiences, and thus called forth the very best the group had to offer. Appropriately festive celebration of the city's patron saint, for example, would have impressed not only citizens but also visitors, rivals, allies, and clergy. Moreover, the saint in question would be expected to smile on the revelers, while the God who ruled all blessed the devotees of His faithful servant.

The line between religious and civic celebrations was often very thin. It may well have been that parishioner-citizens experienced little difference between the festive events of Easter and of a military victory. Of course, the reasons differed for closing shops, donning the family's best, attending a grand Mass with its sung *Te Deum* (a joyful prayer of thanks and praise), feasting at aristocrats' expense, dancing in streets, laughing at street performers, cheering racers or jousters or ball-players, and sharing children's wide-eyed awe at the flaming whirly-gigs of firework displays. In cities such as Naples or Ferrara the elements that constituted festivities were many and varied, and, during a given festival, would have differed somewhat among the classes. Courtly types would have maintained reasonable decorum, while working-class people would have availed themselves of every opportunity to add color to their lives. For example, nobles and other elites would have dined and danced among themselves in their palazzi while providing food, drink, music, and wood for bonfires to their neighbors and fellow Christians who celebrated in the adjacent street or *piazza*.

Pistoia celebrated its patron Saint James, on his feast day of July 25. He had a special chapel in the cathedral, the starting point for observances on the vigil, July 24. In the chapel those responsible for maintaining the cathedral presented traditional gifts to the bishop, who then began the traditional late-day Vespers liturgy. After, he led an evening procession of clergy, communal officials, and city guildsmen. This was capped by a magnificent sung Vigil Mass with special music and texts. The day itself was given over to feasting, dancing, entertainers, competitions, and the running of a palio (horserace) in the evening. Religious services may have taken place in parish or mendicant churches, but the only city-wide religious ritual was the blessing in the cathedral of the palio mounts. After Florence's subjection of Pistoia, the procession was reversed, so the dignitaries and clergy came last, preceded by guildsmen. It was in the

dominant city's interest to downplay any patriotic elements and emphasize the religious in the parade, so relics were now also carried through the city as a means of blessing it.

Little survives that sheds light on religious celebrations in villages, but it is safe to say that they were far less grand in scope or variety than those in urban areas. Local landlords or aristocrats might provide animals for roasting, or holiday breads, and perhaps a barrel of wine. If the festival fell in the harvest season, as All Saints does (November 1), then the pause would be a special relief from the quickened pace of preparations for the winter. It would also mean that more food was available for the tables. It is no coincidence that Lent, the period of fasting before Easter, falls in the leanest part of the year, before spring crops begin to appear. Dancing outdoors in nice weather cost nothing, while the local church or threshing floor could be cleared to provide adequate covered floorspace when weather was inclement. Improvised percussion, shepherd's bagpipes, a recorder or two, and a cheap psaltery or bowed stringed instrument could entertain diners, back up singing, and help dancers work up a sweat and thirst.

Urban streets were stages for civic and ecclesiastical ceremonial. They were also symbolic circulatory routes through which the very life of the city flowed. On a local level parish processions spilled out of church into the people's space, tracing a meaningful path and sanctifying it with prayers, singing, incense, holy water, and perhaps a sacred relic or image. If the feast day was important enough, the cathedral led the way with its city-wide procession. The path would be lined with onlookers, perhaps kneeling as the cross or relics passed by. From the later thirteenth century, on the feast of Corpus Christi, the Body of Christ, a large communion wafer that had been transubstantiated into the Body of Christ was at the symbolic center of what was often a town's largest procession.

Change in Regime, Change in Taste

When Florence returned to Medici control in 1513, the meaning of St. John's Day celebrations shifted. The Medici, rather than communal or even religious themes, were foregrounded. Biblical floats and confraternities unrelated directly to the Medici were retired. Any evidence of traditional republicanism disappeared. Guilds and their members lost their roles, replaced in part by non-guild laborers and Medici-supporting youths. Staged street "battles" between such youths and peasants wielding bricks and wooden weapons, like those in Venice and Pisa, now mocked chivalric jousting, and Roman classicism replaced feudal themes and symbols.

During times of plague local Church and civic authorities also relied on penitential processions featuring flagellant confraternities. They brought their normally secret practice of whipping themselves into the suffering city's arteries, their very blood crying to God for forgiveness, mercy, and an end to the suffering.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Sacred; Music at Church; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Livery; Religious Habits and Vestments; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Jewish Communities; Neighborhood and Parish; Plague; Villages and Village Life; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Calendars: Sacred and Profane; Carnival; Civic Festivals; Music and Dance in Popular Culture; Sports, Contests, and Competitions; Theater, Religious; Weddings; *Religion and Beliefs*: Clergy, Catholic; Confraternities; Friars; Pilgrims and Shrines; Saints and Their Cults

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CIVIC FESTIVALS

Italy's cities and their dependencies had two overlapping calendars. The Catholic Church established one that marked important days dedicated to biblical and Christian historical people and events. The other highlighted specific days that had special meaning for the city-state and its people. In modern America, only Christmas Day, December 25, remains both a federal and Church holiday; but the Italian year was studded with such days. Since every calendar day was dedicated to some religious purpose, it could hardly be otherwise. For a culture deeply committed to the Trinity and the saints this also meant that celebrating a holiday (holy day) that carried secular significance had the dual purpose of commemorating God or the saint. In return, it was hoped the spiritual entities would bless "their" people. Christians celebrated Christmas and Easter for their own sakes, but the feasts of cities' patron saints, such as St. Mark in Venice, and others carried great patriotic weight as well. Civic festivals were by nature, then, both sacred and political, and rather fun as well.

Perhaps the most elaborate was Florence's St. John the Baptist's Day (June 24), the day also commemorating liberation of the city from the Goths in AD 401. One or two days before, Florentine guilds and shops laid out displays of their finest products. Locals and outsiders flocked to see the latest fashions, and the owners were made to feel that they were, in a sense, offering their goods to the saint. Women and girls were encouraged to dress their best, appear in public, and add their beauty to that of the display. Also preceding the saint's day was a procession of male clergy of all types with holy relics. Beginning at the baptistery of St. John, around 400 wound their way through the city on a set route, stopping at significant points. They sang, accompanied by bells and trumpets as their moving presence blessed the city. Confraternities staged religious plays of biblical scenes on floats along the route. Considered distracting, from 1454 the confraternities' presentations (21 in 1454) were moved to the day before, and confraternity brothers joined the clerical procession. On the 24th itself a political procession of representatives of subject towns brought wax, silver, incense, and banners to the Piazza Signoria and on to the baptistery. The remainder of the day was given over to banquets, foot and horse races through decked out city streets, jousts in larger *piazze*, mock gladiatorial games, *calcio* matches, and, from 1563 Medici-sponsored races of chariot-like coaches in Piazza Sta Maria Novella. Nighttime fireworks led to late banquets, bonfires, music, and dancing.

On Ascension Thursday, 40 days after Easter, Venetians celebrated the *Sensa*, or marriage of the doge to the sea. At dawn, churches began ringing bells and singing along the route of the flotilla of gondolas, barges, galleys, and the doge's ship of state, the *Bucintoro*. Following a Mass, the increasingly large fleet proceeded to the lagoon's opening to the sea, where the doge blessed it, threw in a ring, and announced he had married the sea. Merchant ships headed out on the season's first voyages, and the elites returned to banquets. By 1600, 16 annual Venetian festivals included ducal (dogal) processions of hundreds of tightly regimented nobles, bureaucrats, ambassadors, clergy, confraternal members, musicians, and others. The doge was in the middle, with decreasingly important men before and behind. Despite a procession's enormous length its route remained within St. Mark's piazza, causing the line to double back on itself like TSA lines in airports.

Like doges in Venice, popes processed through Rome. The most important event was his *possesso*, or symbolic taking possession of Rome, at the outset of his reign. More a royal takeover rather than a civic celebration, in a world of kings and dukes Romans saw and embraced their ruler. A truly grand procession moved from St. Peter's Basilica, around the Capitoline Hill and to Rome's Cathedral of St. John Lateran on the Caelian Hill. The several-mile-long route was highly decorated and had scores of large triumphal arches spanning the Via Papale and Via San Giovanni in Laterano. Both were cleared and straightened during the Renaissance era to

facilitate this periodic event. Rich individuals and Roman groups designed and built the arches, which often displayed classical motifs, symbolizing the ancient city and papal humanist interests. Rome's Jews paid their obeisance, and the people were fêted in the streets with food and music.

Livrets

French for “booklet,” livrets were small, printed pamphlets or programs that served as souvenirs of court or civic festivities from weddings to royal entrances. The oldest known commemorated a noble wedding in Pesaro in 1475, and Italian printers published perhaps 250 before 1600. Beginning with just heraldic shields, they added verbal descriptions and prints illustrating the events. Officials understood their value as propaganda, spreading abroad the pageantry of a court's or city's state banquets or special religious processions. The same illustration blocks could be used to produce lots of copies of single or half-sheet prints for general distribution.

Special events were also celebrated publicly. In ducal cities dynastic weddings and childbirths were cause for Masses of thanksgiving and state-sponsored food and entertainment. Later sixteenth-century Venetian records list 337 important special events, an average of almost 7 per year. Of these events, 171 were receptions for important foreign ambassadors; 61 welcomed rulers; 39 celebrated military victories, treaties, or the end of plague; 33 welcomed Church dignitaries; and 33 noted state funerals or elections of doges. Strict protocol dictated who met visitors and how far outside the city, who preceded whom, where visitors stayed, and what local sights they were shown. Common folk looked in awe at popes, emperors, and even foreign entourages and drank and dined at the expense of the state for whom all of this was political propaganda.

See also: *Arts:* Music at Church; Music at Court; *Family and Gender:* Heraldry; *Fashion and Appearance:* Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Livery; *Food and Drink:* Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and *Piazze*; *Politics and Warfare:* Ambassadors and Diplomacy; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Calendars: Sacred and Profane; Church Festivals and Processions; Music and Dance in Popular Culture; Noble Pursuits; Sports, Contests, and Competitions; Street Entertainment; *Religion and Beliefs:* Clergy, Catholic; Confraternities; Saints and Their Cults; *Primary Document:* The Festival of St. John in Florence: Gregorio (Goro) Dati. *History of Florence*

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COURTESANS, PROSTITUTES, AND THE SEX TRADE

Women—and men—who were paid for sexual services in Renaissance-era Italian cities, villages, and army camps were a varied lot. At the low end of the spectrum of respectability were poor and vulnerable women who peddled themselves in city streets and back-alleys to all comers, and who had few to no resources. At the other end were the glittering and highly respected courtesans of Venice and Rome, educated women of taste and beauty whose clientele was restricted to the highest classes. Between were prostitutes whose male or female pimps acted as agents and protectors, whores who lived and worked in bordellos or houses of prostitution that were sanctioned by the government, and widows and mothers whose husbands were away (or served as their pimps) and who were in need of the income provided by selling oneself. Much less is known about male prostitutes, except to say that they were probably independent agents who were relatively young and far fewer than their female counterparts. Female prostitutes were tolerated and taxed, while male homosexuality was prohibited and considered shameful in most Italian communities.

Courtesans were often courtesans' daughters who had benefited from their mothers' wealth, education, experience, and contacts. The same was true of many lower-class prostitutes, for whom the benefits were far less obvious. Prostitute-mothers would put their young, unmarried daughters into the trade when their own charms faded. In the sixteenth century a popular form of Catholic charity was funding homes for just such at-risk girls, with the goal of finding them suitable husbands. Girls who had been orphaned, raped and disowned, or recently arrived in the city from their rural homes seeking work were also vulnerable to pimps and bordello operators. New arrivals, young men, and visitors quickly learned where the local sex trade was centered. It was along Perugia's Malacucina (bad kitchen) Alley; in Rome in the Ortaccio near the Mausoleum of Augustus (where in 1566 they were walled into a kind of ghetto) and the Florentine-dominated Ponte district; and around Venice's Rialto marketplace and in four or five neighborhoods near the Arsenale shipyards. In Florence they congregated in workers' and foreigners' neighborhoods of Santa Croce and Santo Spirito, and between the Cathedral and the Old Marketplace, though in the sixteenth century "whoretown" expanded toward the Palazzo Medici. In general, bordellos appeared where inns, taverns, and warehouses served visiting merchants and travelers. Bathhouses (*stufè*) often featured sexual servicing until being shut down from the 1490s during the scourge of syphilis. Of course, wherever soldiers camped between campaigns or barracked for the winter prostitutes could be found, especially when the men had recently been paid.

City governments, including Rome's, tolerated prostitution while regulating it. Essentially, the presence of prostitutes lessened the danger to "honest" girls and women presented by Venice's foreign merchants and seamen; false pilgrims, tourists, celibate clerics, and visiting aristocrats in Rome; and unmarried young local men everywhere. Early in the fifteenth century Florence made it clear that it was sanctioning whorehouses lest its virile single young men turn to homosexuality. Rome's 1490 census found at least 6,800 prostitutes—plus pimps, mistresses, concubines—in a population of around 50,000, though the number dropped to 4,900 by 1527. In Venice in the early sixteenth century perhaps 10,000 to 12,000 plied their trade in the city of 80,000. By comparison, Florence registered a mere 150 women in 1486.

Civic liberality went uncomfortably with Christian morality, and prostitutes were rounded up or shut into bordellos when religious reform swept a city, important visitors descended, or the threat of plague made city fathers think twice about supporting sexual license that would anger God.

In general, women were prohibited from streetwalking, banned from soliciting near a nunnery in any case, and either forced to wear distinctive clothing or forbidden to wear certain fashions, fabrics, or accessories. In the wake of the Black

Death Cremona banned prostitutes from the city's cathedral, baptistery, and central *piazza*. In 1416 the Visconti regime in Milan forced prostitutes to wear white cloaks as a sign of their occupation, and the following year all had to abandon the streets for their brothels. In Piedmont, early Renaissance-era cities had tried laws prohibiting prostitution, but by the 1430s the ducal government forced sex workers into state-supported brothels. The year 1403 saw in Florence the earliest Italian state brothels and the first magistracy both to protect and to restrict the sex trade: prostitutes had to wear gloves, bells, and high-heeled slippers in the streets. During the reform years of Dominican friar Savonarola (1490–98), “honest” women could chase the immoral ones from the streets with impunity. A Venetian law of 1562 forbade prostitutes or courtesans from wearing gold or silver chains, rings, earrings, real or fake jewels, silk clothing, or any fabrics less than 50% wool. After the Council of Trent, such pressures against the trade became even stronger.

Courtesans, concentrated in Venice and Rome, lived the high life. When allowed by the state, they wore the finest clothing and jewelry, feasted at and sometimes hosted banquets and balls, lived in palatial apartments, and even posed for such painters as Raphael and Titian. They wrote and presented poetry and music to the highest levels of society, and slept in bedrooms decked out in silks and satins, erotic art, and mirrors, and scented with the Orient's perfumes. Talented poetesses included Tullia d' Aragona, Gaspara Stampa, and Veronica Franco. Both cities also hosted Jewish courtesans, such as Rome's Madonna Nicolosa and the Venetian Bellina Hebrea. In the early 1500s Imperia, consort of obscenely wealthy banker Agostino Chigi, had Venus portrayed on the façade of her own splendidly appointed palazzo in the Borgo near the Vatican. In the end, she took her own life.

Though some courtesans grew old and wealthy, for most sex workers the life was full of dangers. Sexually charged emotions could run high and result in assault, rape, or murder. Jealousy by clients, competitors, or former pimps resulted in facial disfigurement that all but ended one's career. Though a courtesan might have a stable of customers, the disgrace or death of an important one might force relocation or retirement. And of course, with the introduction of syphilis in the 1490s came the horrors of mercury treatments and early death. For those fortunate enough to retire, the sixteenth-century Church provided homes or nunneries for reformed prostitutes (*convertite*): Genoa, c. 1510; Rome, 1520; Palermo, 1524; Milan, 1532; and others later.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Courtly; Portraits; Women and the Arts; Women Poets and Their Poetry; *Economics and Work*: Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Homosexuality and Sodomy; Widows; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; Fashion in Art; Social Status and Clothing; Sumptuary Laws; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and

Offices; Crime and Punishments; Soldiers; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Pornography and Erotica; *Religion and Beliefs*: Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; *Science and Technology*: Disease and Humoral Medicine

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Dance. See Music and Dance in Popular Culture

DRUNKENNESS

Wine was as much a part of Italian life as bread and music. The dangers of overindulging, however, were well known and feared by many. That others did become inebriated was unfortunate, but also served as a caution to the otherwise sober to moderate their intake.

From a medical standpoint, wines were healthful foods that, like all foods, were to be consumed in moderation. In general, wines were believed to add to the humoral heat of the body, hence the warm flush that accompanies drinking. Such heat could be very good if the body was naturally or temporarily cooler than it should be. For example, the elderly lost warmth with age, a condition that could

be remedied in part by drinking. Wine was considered one of the substances most easily converted by digestion to blood, and just as blood was vital, so was wine. In addition, wine tempered melancholy, a condition to which the aged were prone, and aided sleep, which many lacked. One physician claimed that classical Romans limited wine to those over 35, lest they become overheated. Some contemporaries would also limit it to adults, for another doctor, to those over 25.

Italians, like ancient Greeks and Romans, normally drank wine mixed with water (or perhaps it was water mixed with wine, physicians disagreed). While we understand that it cuts the alcohol content by volume, for them it was a way of reducing the natural heat in the drink. It was also a way of killing some of the germs in the water, though they did not understand this. They did understand that different wines had different properties, but for them these made different wines more or less appropriate for different groups: men, women, the old, the young, the sick, the well, laborers, or scholars. White, red, heavy, light, dense, clear, cloudy, young, old, sweet, dry or even sour, each had its proper drinker, amount of dilution, accompanying food, and even time of day.

We say that alcohol goes to one's head, but they meant it physically. It heated the humors and caused unhealthy vapors to rise to the brain. Here they played havoc, as any reveler knew. Reason was clouded, passions such as anger and libido were fired up, and the results could range from embarrassing to tragic. One reason to deprive already-warm children was that should they overindulge they would become unable to learn necessary skills or knowledge. Women who were already warm and libidinous would have less control over their sex drive and create obvious problems for themselves and others.

Drunkenness in some was a part of their nature. Alcoholism was not considered a sickness but an appetite, not unlike that for sweets or sex. Whether at court or in the tavern, though, it was a source of dishonor, as the drunk reduced himself or herself to the state of an animal instead of a rational person. He or she might be amusing to others, but was nonetheless disgraceful. Conduct manuals regularly warned against becoming drunk at high-class social gatherings, reminding diners that disgusting things happened when one lost one's self-control. Monks were said to drink too much, as did soldiers and whores and thugs. The unscrupulous did their best to get their targets inebriated to lower their defenses and ability to reason. Excessive drinking was associated with sexual seduction and rape, robbery, gambling, and humiliation. It was also associated with violence among both men and women. At the tavern an argument started and got heated, insults flew, and knives or other weapons came out. The drunken, wife-beating husband was almost a stereotype. While public inebriation itself was rarely a cause for police action, its consequences often were.

Temperance was a virtue that helped one maintain balance in one's life. One symbol of this was the mixing of water and wine, which lessened wine's ill effects on the body and the mind. If temperance or moderation was a virtue, its opposite, over-indulgence, was a vice and a sin. The physicians and conduct manual authors were joined by preachers and lay moralists, often influenced by classical writings, who urged their listeners and readers to refrain from drunkenness. A religion that uses wine in its central ritual could hardly condemn its consumption in society at large, but it did attack its abuse. From biblical Noah's behavior after the vintage came in—he got drunk and passed out—to St Paul's warnings against Christians living dissolute lives in drunkenness and reveling, the Church's stance was clear: moderation and sobriety were to be the Christian's watchwords. Wine was a gift of God not to be abused. Humanists, too, urged sobriety and self-control. Their favorite authors, both Classical pagans and early Christian Fathers of the Church such as St. Augustine, decried the unnatural state of inebriation. It was especially shameful when one who had power over or responsibility for others was reduced to a drunken stupor.

The cultural strands that informed Italian society wove themselves together to present a common front against the abusing of wine and by extension other spirits. Medicine, the Church, humanism, and emerging norms of conduct universally condemned drunkenness. Poets, storytellers, and satirists may have extolled the virtues of wine, and perhaps even drinking to excess, but society at large knew how to interpret such messages. The drunk ignored them.

See also: *Family and Gender:* Old Age; *Virtù* and Honor; *Food and Drink:* Conduct at Table; Galenic Health Regimens; Wines; *Housing and Community:* Poverty and the Poor; *Politics and Warfare:* Crime and Punishments; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Carnival; Gambling; Taverns and Inns; *Science and Technology:* Alchemy

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EXECUTIONS

When a state executes a convicted criminal, it makes the ultimate demand of the person: his or her very life. Legitimate states generally execute wrongdoers at least to some extent in public. Notice is given, pardon may be sought, and some

representatives of the public are present to witness the event. Advocates of capital punishment point out that the forfeiture of life reinforces the state's legitimate monopoly of power over life, serves as a deterrent to future offenders, and provides citizens a sense of closure and justice, and perhaps vengeance. During the Renaissance era, public executions were a form of communal catharsis that fulfilled these purposes and further served as a form of communal entertainment. Like the era's morality plays, they involved the public in an emphatic restatement of common values and helped the wounded community heal.

Unlike our own highly sanitized age, the Renaissance era regularly confronted dying and death. Unsuccessful childbirth, street violence, plague mortality, staged dissections of corpses, the open butchery of live animals for fresh meat, death at home from illness or accident, public funerals, and burials were all part of daily life. The government ending a life at the end of a rope or the edge of an ax, while grisly, was hardly something novel. Like modern spectators watching automobile races for the excitement of the accident, Renaissance-era Florentines, Neapolitans, or Sicilians attended executions for the rope that snapped, the attempted escape or rescue, the convict's venomous last words of hate or cursing or calling on the devil. Attending a hanging, decapitation, or burning gave one the right to boast "I was there!" and saw firsthand the end of the famous murderer, spy, heretic, bandit, rebels, witch, or thief whom gossip and printed ballads celebrated.

Public executions were neither rare nor common. In later fourteenth-century Florence an annual average of 11 to 13 took place, falling to 7 or 8 a century later and fewer still in the sixteenth century. Bologna, on the other hand, saw 9 to 13 annual executions in the 1410s and 1420s, only 3 annually in the 1470s, but 15.3 between 1540 and 1600.

Italian society was at least nominally Christian as well as used to bloodshed. In 1335 a group of pious Bolognese men, inspired by a local Franciscan friar, established the confraternity of Santa Maria of Death, or simply the Company of Death. Unlike confraternities that took on the tasks of helping the poor or burying the dead, these lay brothers dedicated themselves to comforting those who were about to be executed. It became one of Bologna's largest and most powerful confraternities. The model caught on and spread across Italy over the next century. Some cities had their "Company of Justice," while in Florence and Ferrara they were simply "The Blacks." While other European societies provided a similar role to clergy, especially friars, Italy was unique in relegating it to lay volunteers. Members might be from any walk of life, and even included Lorenzo de' Medici. They were aided in preparing for their ministry by their experienced brothers, and by Comforters' Manuals, such as that translated and published by Terpstra.

In Bologna, the comforter was chosen by an officer of the confraternity, probably with an eye to avoiding anyone connected to the condemned man or his crimes.

The officer and comforter prayed and the comforter steeled himself spiritually for the long night ahead. When he joined the condemned man in the cell he shared with other incarcerated men, the comforter had to compete with the raucous hub-bub of the cellmates as well as the emotions of the nearly departed. These could range from hysteria to non-responsiveness. Some welcomed the companionship and opportunity to unburden their spirits; others reacted with hostility and cursed the whole business. The comforter was to try to put the prisoner in a state of spiritual reflection—especially contrition and penitence—and to focus his attention on the Gospel promises of forgiveness and eternal life. His role was really that of the preachers he heard so often, and the rhetoric he was to employ was to be simple and straightforward. They were to pray as well as sing commonly known religious hymns, and the comforter was to keep the prisoner's eyes on a specially prepared religious painting, or *tavoletta*. This was often two-sided or even a two-piece diptych that featured images of Christ crucified, a loving mother Mary, or saints being martyred. Again, the idea was to turn the condemned man's attention to his spiritual fate and to reassure him if he had done all the Church required.

When the time came—dawn in Bologna—the pair either walked or rode a cart to the place of execution. If the convict was notorious, the road could be lined with jeering crowds. The comforter was to shield him physically from the hostility with his white cape, and to keep his eyes on the *tavoletta* and off the crowd and the looming execution site. The two sang or prayed aloud, or the comforter continued a monologue of soothing pieties meant to drown out the crowd's clamor. A contemporary sketch shows the comforter even mounting the ladder to the gibbet from which the convict would soon hang. If the condemned man expressed obvious spiritual peace at the point of death, then the comforter's job had been done well. The body would soon be destroyed, but the soul had been saved.

As an epilogue the body hung for many hours or sometimes days, or if decapitated the remains were displayed for all to see. When allowed, the brothers saw to it that corpses were buried or delivered for medical dissection.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; *Family and Gender:* Last Wills and Testaments; *Fashion and Appearance:* Religious Habits and Vestments; *Housing and Community:* Death in the Community; Prisons; *Politics and Warfare:* Crime and Punishments; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Songs and Singing, Popular; *Religion and Beliefs:* Confraternities; Crucifix; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; *Science and Technology:* Anatomy and Dissection

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Festivals. *See Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals*

GAMBLING

Gambling took place anywhere, and wagers were made on just about anything with an unforeseeable outcome. Games of chance took place in Venetian casinos, noble courts, warehouses, streets, and taverns, aboard ship, on church steps, behind shops, and at home. Bets were placed on the outcome of sports contests, the identity of the next pope, the winner of a military battle, and the sex of a newborn baby (a wager banned in Florence and Rome in 1578). People wagered on matters of skill, such as feats of strength, horse races, or games of chess. All gambling required the calculation of risk and the balancing of possible outcomes, and cheating and fraud were always possible. In other words, gambling reflected life itself.

Perhaps the simplest form of gambling was betting on the outcome of a sporting match such as a game of *calcio* or a palio (horserace) or cockfight. The outcome was a matter of public record, and bets could be recorded and held by a broker or uninterested party. Bets could be made without producing the money up front, but the loser had little incentive beyond peer pressure and honor to produce the forfeited sum.

Catholic preachers and moralists had to admit that gambling was not itself a sin, but vehemently inveighed against it nonetheless. Poet and moralist Francesco Petrarch noted that someone always loses and the winner just gets drawn back in. Confraternities fined or expelled members who notoriously gambled. Gambling tested God; it wasted a person's time and family's resources; it encouraged moral evils such as greed, fraud, and cheating; it led to quarreling and violence; it was associated with pimps, prostitutes, itinerant lowlifes, and Jews, as well as drinking and other vices. For youth, it was a gateway vice for thievery, and generally involved one with people of dubious character. When Florence's Archbishop Antonino came upon organized gambling at the Buondelmonte loggia, he overturned the tables and scattered the players. In the 1490s Dominican preacher and demagogue Girolamo Savonarola used gangs of 25 to 30 Florentine youths to

accomplish the same goal. They seized the money to give to the poor and burned the cards, dice, and gameboards in their bonfires of vanities. Though gambling was normally considered a crime, aristocrats were generally exempted from punishment and others given sentences of light torture or the pillory. The ages and statuses of participants were also factors, and fines of double the amount wagered were not unusual. In mid-fifteenth-century Florence up to 400 people were arrested annually. Venetian gamblers were tried in the same court as printers of illegal materials and blasphemers. A Ferrarese law of the 1470s specifically linked gambling to blaspheming, as well as theft, violence, and death.

Cheating was an ever-present problem for those seeking an honest game of chance. Among friends, family, or neighbors this was unlikely, but the dishonest easily found marks and often moved on quickly from place to place. Some games utilized shills, people who secretly worked with or for the person running the game. Playing cards, used from at least the 1370s, became cheaper and omnipresent in the 1500s with mass production by printing. Card sharps marked the backs of cards signaling their values and allowing the dishonest player to read his opponents' hands. Dice were loaded, or unbalanced, to raise the likelihood of certain numbers being thrown. Hosts and shills used counterfeit money, and rural or urban laborers were easily duped by sleight of hand, intimidated by angry accusations of cheating, or the fleeced by the appearance of "officials" who broke up games and confiscated players' money. The chief bar against cheating was the Italian emphasis on one's honor and social reputation. To cheat was both a violation against one's own honor and an assault on the victim's. An accusation might bring not only loud words but also sharp knives.

Gambling was specifically banned from certain locations in cities, such as Milan's new government building in 1416. Marketplaces were especially likely to draw dishonest games that could impoverish the visiting rural simpleton. Officials much preferred that *contadini* spend their money buying goods that could be taxed. And no place of business welcomed the verbal and physical violence that accompanied the shame of losing. Some cities dealt with gambling as they did prostitution, allowing limited access to legal betting. In the Veneto it was licit in certain places and on specific days—especially during Carnival. Tuscan cities made similar exceptions, early on providing licenses to tax-paying establishments. Venetian aristocrats, like nobles everywhere, had their own venues for gaming, including each other's palazzi and villas. Niccolò di Sanseverino, the prince of Bisignano, racked up gambling debts worth 1,700,000 ducats. Unusually for a nobleman, he was imprisoned in a Neapolitan jail. In sixteenth-century Venice, secure aristocratic clubs known as *ridotti* featured eating, dancing, sex, and gambling. Their most popular game was *bassetto*, in which players bet on whether a specific card would be dealt to the dealer or player. In 1638 the state officially sponsored its

first *ridotto*. In 1556, Duke Cosimo I in Florence introduced a state lottery to help defray the costs of building his Tuscan grand duchy. It proved very successful.

See also: *Family and Gender*: Families, Laboring Class; *Virtù* and Honor; *Housing and Community*: Palazzi; Villages and Village Life; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Crime and Punishments; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Games and Pastimes; Noble Pursuits; Sports, Contests, and Competitions; Street Entertainment; Taverns and Inns

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GAMES AND PASTIMES

It was a warm afternoon on a festival day when no one worked or played too strenuously. Everyone merely passed time in his or her own ways: the pair of lovers differed from the pair of old men; the soldiers in camp differed from the children in the village square; the patrician family differed from the gang of youth searching out a bit of excitement, which differed from the pious Jewish family. Age, sex, occupation, social class, residency, and other factors such as simple inclination or chosen peer group helped determine how people spent their "spare time." One 14-year-old boy helped his friends in the parish confraternity decorate their parade float, while his 15-year-old brother gambled behind the neighborhood tavern. Games were diversions that involved a limited number of people, agreed-upon rules for play, and clear criteria for winning. Though gambling was often involved, it was usually not integral to play. As opposed to a competitive sport, a game could usually be played sitting down and required no physical skill. Some were suitable for children, and most for mixed companies of men and women. Many required equipment—cards, dice, a board and pieces—but some were purely oral, exercising creativity and verbal skill.

The oral games of which we have a record are those played by elites. Fifteenth-century Florentine humanist Leon Battista Alberti set the rules for *certame coronario*, a contest in which poets writing in Italian praised friendship in



The well-dressed card players are part of a series of oil paintings loosely depicting the *Aeneid* by classical Roman poet Vergil. Dosso Dossi (ca. 1486–1542) painted the series, which featured scenes of hunting and other leisure activities, for Duke Alfonso I d'Este of Ferrara around 1518. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

the manner of Cicero. Clearly this was elite stuff. In 1441 a competition was presented in Florence's cathedral and judged by ten papal secretaries. Alberti himself was there, but judged the entries as beneath the Italian language's potential. Story-telling was easily turned into a contest—witness those of Boccaccio's refugees and Chaucer's pilgrims. Siennese elites made these part of an evening's entertainment, or *veglia*. A member of the Siennese academy of the Intronati made a list of and discussed 130 such adult evening games, or *venture*, in 1572. Many involved extemporaneous debates or speeches. When company was mixed, it might have been "Monks and Nuns," in which pairs playfully accused and defended themselves of and against fictitious charges, often

sexual. Less naughty was a version in which "monks" had to make speeches begging alms in return for prayers. "Sins of Lovers" was akin to Truth or Dare.

Popular across classes were checkers, chess, and backgammon. Chess had had a long history, and had been associated in courtly culture with lovers' games. An image of a well-attired couple playing the game in a garden was a pictorial euphemism for sex. Perhaps like love, chess was a game of skill, and one might become increasingly proficient. Other board games relied upon luck. Pluck the Owl was invented in 1589. Printed sheets featured squares depicting common occupations, and each had a value that was to be given into or taken from the money pot. The roll of three dice determined movement. Closely related was Goose, a board game invented for Grand Duke Francesco de' Medici. The board had either 49 (7 x 7) or 63 (7 x 9) squares. Movement of a player's piece toward the final, winning square was according to dice rolls. If a square was already occupied, the active player moved backward. Some squares doubled the value of the roll; others lost the player a turn or two. Toward the end, rolling more than the needed squares moved

the player backward. These board games combined throwing dice with movement of a playing piece toward a goal. Of course, players or even observers could bet on the outcome, and no doubt they often did. Merely throwing a die or dice with bets on the number that would come up had no amusement value beyond the betting involved. Hazard was such a game, in which a player rolled a number and the winner was the next one to roll that number. Unless dice were loaded—weighted to one side so that certain numbers came up more often—such games were pure matters of chance, the meaning of the French *hasard*.

Tarot Cards

A civic chronicle entry of 1377 first mentions tarot cards, and the oldest extant deck—the painted Visconti Tarot—dates from about 1450. Printed (woodcut) cards appeared around 1440. Early card suits and imagery differed; standard decks eventually had 78 cards divided into major and minor “mysteries.” Twenty-two cards (major) featured allegorical humans, while 56 (minor) were divided into four suits: cups, staves, swords, and coins. Each suit had cards numbered 1–10 and four face cards: page, knight, queen, king. Derived from Egypt, tarot seems not to have been used for fortune telling in Renaissance Italy as it is today.

Some games were matters of manual dexterity. One of these was similar to modern jacks, using sheep’s knuckle bones. Card games combined luck and careful choices during play. Elites saw them as metaphors for life, which made certain provisions for a person who then had to work his or her way to the best outcome. High skill at playing cards, as demonstrated by Lorenzo de’ Medici, was applauded in the highest circles and among the vilest reprobates. Playing cards originated in Korea or China and entered Venice through the Islamic world. A chronicler wrote that the “game of cards” arrived in Viterbo in 1379. Cards made by woodblock printing dates to the 1420s, and mechanical printing from mid-century made cards cheaper and more uniform. Earliest known decks had 52 cards in four suites (cups, swords, coins, batons) of 13 values (1–10, King, Knight, Foot Soldier). *Primero* or *primiera* was a popular peasant game in which the 8, 9, and 10 cards were removed from the deck. Card values were reassigned, so that a one or ace was worth 16, the 2 12, 3 13, 4 14, 5 15, 6 18, 7 21 and face cards 10. Like poker, certain combinations had the highest ranking: four of a kind, flush. . .; otherwise the value of a hand was the value of the cards one held. After an initial distribution, players went around the table discarding and/or adding to their hands until two “called” by literally knocking, ending play. High hand won.

See also: Arts: Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Housing and Community:* Villages and Village Life; Villas; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Children's Toys and Games; Gambling; Taverns and Inns

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Inns. *See* Taverns and Inns

Letters and Letter Writing. *See* Women, Letters, and Letter Writing

Literacy. *See* Reading

MADNESS

Everyone acts a bit oddly at times. But some do so in ways that are outside of normally acceptable behavior. Violent and uncontrollable fits, utterly unresponsive catatonia, or nonsensical outbursts are other than normal, and Italians recognized these and other unusual behaviors as madness (*pazzia*). Not all strange activity, however, warranted the label. Some was clearly the result of demonic possession or a curse rather than madness; others, such as starving oneself or weeping uncontrollably in the presence of a religious relic or image, were probably signs of great spiritual depth. Decidedly holy men and women heard voices and saw vivid visions that others did not, but this was cause for sainthood and not concern. For Renaissance-era Italians true madness was a physiological condition as they understood the concept.

The Renaissance era inherited a very sophisticated medical model from the classical Greeks and Romans and medieval Muslims. One's health was largely a matter of the state of one's balance of humors, four fluids flowing in the body. Diet, exercise, environmental factors, even the planets had an effect on these humors and thus on health. When occurring in overabundance, the humor black bile or choler caused melancholy, a state of dark moods and essentially a type of depression. Some, such as scholars and artists and those born under the astrological influence of the planet Saturn, were prone to melancholy. In severe cases, however, one's ability to engage the world around simply disappeared. Melancholy was also a "dry" condition, which supposedly robbed the brain of needed moisture, which accounted for some of the symptoms. This condition was aggravated by overworking the brain, as scholars and artists were thought to do. Mild conditions could be remedied with exercise, purging, and certain foods and drinks and herbal drugs. The early sixteenth-century *Recipe-Book* of Florence's Santa Maria Nuova Hospital contained six formulas for treating lethargy or melancholy. One is a purge to induce vomiting—theoretically of black bile—using wild cucumber and aloe. Left unchecked, the result could be the more serious and less treatable mania.

Institutionalizing the insane came late to Italy. The family was the natural home to those who could not care for themselves. In some sufferers, aggressive behavior could be difficult to predict or control, and they would be strapped or chained out of sight. In one case a man was to be transferred from a prison to his home, where he was kept in a room 9 ½ by 12 ½ feet with a "high" window through which food would be passed. This arrangement impressed the public inspector. The Renaissance-era state could and did imprison the criminally violent, as in a special section of the Stinche prison in Florence. While here, one's family would pay for food and other necessities. This, of course, was in no way therapeutic and could only be considered a temporary measure. Nunneries and monasteries, often refuges for the unfortunate, were of no help. Most hospitals did not admit insane patients because they avoided the chronically ill and because of the potential for disruption. Santa Maria Nuova, however, had a room set aside for such folks. As early as 1436, Spanish Seville hosted the House of the Innocents to enclose the insane. In 1550 a group of Sevillian priests in Rome copied this in founding Santa Maria della Pietà, Italy's first dedicated asylum. Florence did not receive its first until 1643.

Madness became a public issue when behaviors appeared in public, or when caregivers could no longer do their job and had to call for intervention from beyond the family. In Florence the Court of Wardship (*Pupilli*) handled many such cases, acting in the best interest of minors and impaired adults who lacked a living father or guardian. In cases of developmentally challenged children of widows, the woman usually had guardianship and custody over a male until age 18, when the closest male relative took over. If the child had received an inheritance from

which this relative would benefit in the event of the ward's death, however, things changed. The relative would be disqualified, and the court would step in to decide upon another who would be willing to take up the burden. Consensus had to be reached among relatives, which could lead to litigation. As Mellyn points out, the final result was made very public, not only to relatives but also in the village or neighborhood at large.

Madness was sometimes viewed as a backward or upside-down condition: the joyful cried bitterly or the exhausted became manic. Society at large celebrated such inversion every year during Carnival, when all the rules seemed to be ignored. Thus there was a place for a kind of controlled madness as social safety valve. Renaissance-era satiric literature also used this theme in laying out political or social critiques. Tommaso Garzoni's commentary *Hospital of Incurable Madness* (1586) thus took its place beside the earlier satires *Ship of Fools* by German Sebastian Brandt and Erasmus's well-known *Praise of Folly*.

See also: *Family and Gender*: Health and Illness; Inheritance; *Food and Drink*: Drugs; Galenic Health Regimens; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Prisons; *Politics and Warfare*: Civic Magistracies and Offices; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; *Religion and Beliefs*: Witches and Sorcerers

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MUSIC AND DANCE IN POPULAR CULTURE

At the end of each of ten days' storytelling, the ten young Florentines in Boccaccio's *Decameron* sang, danced, or listened to music. They were staying at a hillside villa, escaping the Black Death. They were also following the advice of physicians: use music in its various forms to keep one's passions—especially fear—moderated and one's mind off the plague's horrors. Music was healthy. It was also an aphrodisiac. Elite dancing instructors wrote that for the non-noble dance was merely a prelude to sex, a judgment also made by preachers and probably most girls' parents.

So music quelled fear and incited lust; it also played many other roles in daily life. Everybody sang, and for a whole host of reasons. Music accompanied the Mass, and religious processions and festival events. Monks and nuns chanted the psalms several times every day; bells called people to work, prayer, and funerals. Trumpeters, drummers, and fifers went to battle and helped announce important communal news. Lovers strummed lutes while singing passionately to one another; harpsichords or string consorts or both played in the background to small feasts given by wealthy merchants or bankers. Groups of literate singers sang complex madrigals from part-books for their own enjoyment or as a performance, and peasants sang age-old tunes from memory as they labored in the fields. And of course, people danced, and for dancing they needed musical instruments.

Among the upper urban classes knowing how to dance properly was a given. Both girls and boys had tutors or attended schools to learn not only grace and balance in movement but also the specific dance steps that were current. This middle class lay somewhere between the courtly class with its highly structured dance forms and the lower classes who had learned to dance as children from relatives at weddings. With the advent of printing, dance manuals left the courts and landed on the tables of urban merchants, guildsmen, and professionals who sought to emulate their social betters. Balls were a part of family celebrations, such as weddings, filling the hall of the palazzo with finely dressed ladies and gentlemen. Giuseppe Ebreo, brother of the famed Neapolitan court dance master Guglielmo Ebreo, ran a dancing school in Florence and frequented the company of Lorenzo de' Medici. Many other such schools flourished in most Italian cities. Some Florentine dancing schools—presumably not his—were notorious as magnets for sodomites, as were later fencing schools.

Instrumental accompaniment to dance was far more likely to be raucous rather than elegant—like the dance tunes themselves—consisting of wind instruments rather than strings. At Naples's fifteenth-century court, the standard ensemble was one bass and two tenor shawms (brash oboe-like double-reeds), a sackbut (early trombone), and a drum for rhythm. It was the same ensemble the king took to battle. Guilds and city governments had their own consorts, perhaps similar to the Neapolitan but with trumpets, fifes, and shorter horns. In Venice, the doge's wind band performed for official events and was also hired for private gatherings including espousals and the parties that followed. Largely wind and brass consorts were also preferred for large feasts, at which the noise of guests and servants would easily drown out less full-throated instruments.

Music was performed in gardens, bedrooms, halls, churches, streets, gondolas, and increasingly in dedicated spaces for music. Private homes, large ones of course, began creating music rooms, as evidenced by collections of instruments and music books listed in inventories. One Venetian household possessed an organ,

two harpsichords, five lutes, and five viols; in 1593, one in Verona contained 78 instruments. From the 1530s several Paduan villas featured free-standing, domed, octagonal performance “odeons.” These were based on a classical structure in Cassino, had well-balanced acoustics, and could hold two or three dozen listeners and an ensemble.

Pay-by-Poem

At least one enterprising sixteenth-century Florentine poet, Alfonso de’Pazzi, wrote Carnival poems and provided singers with the trimmings for musical performances that might wend their way through Florence’s neighborhoods. He charged 50 florins for a daytime *mascherata* group that traveled, singing masked, on foot; 100 for a daytime or torchlit nighttime spectacle that stopped at houses of nobles and patrician women; and 300 if the client wanted a pageant wagon with singers afoot and horseback. Poems/songs could be transgressive, sexually charged, or silly, and clients were wealthy men or organizations wishing to add to Florence’s festive atmosphere. Pazzi advertised on the title page of his collected poems.

There were many sources for musical forms, texts, and tunes. Much was traditional or based in Church music. In the south, Spanish influence included certain “salty” songs and rather sensuous dances. A tradition of Moorish slave dialogues provided the *moresca* songs and vigorous dances, sometimes performed in exotic costumes. Traditional Neapolitan “peasant songs” were borrowed and transformed by sixteenth-century Flemish composer Adrian Willaert, who was working in Venice. The popular madrigal, which was sung by all literate classes, hailed from Venice, with a revival of Francesco Petrarch’s poetry. Marquisa Isabella d’Este championed Italian musical forms over imported, and planted the seeds from her court in Mantua. Petrarch’s 103 poems *On the Death of Madonna Laura* and 263 *On the Life*. . . provided ample material for two generations of composers, professional and amateur. His masterful use of word sound, verbal imagery, and rhythms attracted composers, while the sentiments of love and loss drew a constant audience. His *Canzonieri* (songs) were first published as poetry in 1501, followed by 130 printed editions. By any standard it was a best seller.

See also: *Arts:* Dance, Courtly; Music at Church; Musical Instruments; *Economics and Work:* Book Printing and Sales; *Food and Drink:* Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and *Piazze*; Palazzi; Villages and Village Life; Villas; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Carnival; Church Festivals and

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NEWS

News is information about current or recent events of significance that is collected and disseminated to an audience that is likely to be interested. As today, in the Renaissance era some news was highly focused, such the daily value of the florin in lire or the arrival of a new Spanish ambassador at the papal court. In other cases—the outcome of a major battle in Italy or the approach of plague to a major city—entire populations needed to know. Naturally, some disseminated information proved false, the result of mistake, rumor, or deliberate propaganda.

Of course, word of mouth was most people's main source of information. News of births, deaths, convictions, local bankruptcies, and fires was announced at chance meetings in the streets, church, market, or wine shop. From the pulpit

the parish priest notified his flock of deaths, espousals, baptisms, and sick neighbors, as well as any dictates from the bishop. City halls generally had a balcony or platform from which important official laws were pronounced: Florence's Palazzo della Signoria (Palazzo Vecchio from the 1550s) featured the *arringhiera*, from which the English word "harangue" is derived. The distinctive civic bell would toll to call citizens to gather, and a civic trumpeter would bid them listen. Very important messages would be repeated in major *piazze* and intersections by civic trumpeters and criers. Traveling mountebanks and charlatans often used the latest regional buzz to draw attention to themselves and their products in markets and *piazze*. Public preachers seeking to draw crowds used the same ploy, outlining or commenting on some scandal or tragedy to draw a moral point. With the advent of printing, the preacher might hand out or the charlatan might sell an illustrated flyer relating the event to God or the pitchman's goods. News singers were itinerant entertainers who composed short ballads on current noteworthy events and sang them to the crowds that swirled about them. After about 1500 they, too, worked with local printers to produce cheap illustrated copies of their ballads for sale for a few denari from interested passersby impressed by the performance. Residents of port cities such as Naples, Genoa, Livorno, and Venice often gained important intelligence from merchants and sailors on arriving ships, making docks and their locales important news centers. The very latest might also be heard in urban commercial and political centers, such as Venice's Piazza San Marco and Rialto. In general, Venice was the clearinghouse for anything noteworthy from the eastern Mediterranean and agents from across Europe gathered here to siphon useful tidbits to send northward.

But even targeted news traveled only as quickly as people did. While rulers could afford special couriers throughout the Renaissance era, lesser humans usually relied on the random kindness of trustworthy friends, associates, clergy, and other travelers. Yet as early as 1357, 17 Florentine companies created and shared a private courier service that linked Florence with Barcelona; with Milan, Cologne, and Bruges; with Milan, Paris, and Bruges; and with Bruges and Barcelona via Genoa. Regular public courier service seems to have developed first from Milan in the 1440s. Later in the decade entrepreneur Antonio Vantaggio had a network of couriers linking Italian cities, and a message or news could get from Florence to Rome in 5 days, Florence to Bruges in 25, and Florence to Seville in 32. Such services multiplied, especially after the Italian Wars ground to a halt. In 1541 a regular public postal service opened between Venice and Rome.

Just as courier services made a business of news delivery, printing made a business of formatting the news by supplementing word of mouth with the printed page. By combining printed text and image, as they did for hucksters and preachers, printers produced broadsheets suitable for framing featuring current events. Of

higher quality than the ballad sheets and sometimes featuring hand-colored illustrations, they were distributed by the printshops, through bookstores, wine shops, barber-surgeons, and street hawkers working major *piazze* and markets. Woodcuts of battles, miracles, or funerals could be reused with the text changing to fit the facts (or rumors). Printers also produced *bandi* or official posters that were affixed to walls, doors, columns, gates, and other public surfaces that served as bulletin boards. Sixteenth-century prints show clusters of people gathered around such *bandi* as one reads to the crowd of new taxes or health or criminal regulations. These sometimes merely amplified oral proclamations from city hall, but sometimes these replaced them. They were especially useful to the regime if it believed organized trouble might follow the news. Another form of terrible public information was lists of those who died of plague, which were hung on the gates of pest houses during plague epidemics.

Avvisi

From Italian for “advice” or “notice,” an *avviso* was a handwritten news-letter or bulletin provided for either private or personal consumption. The public usually did not know the author—or *novellante*—of a given *avviso*, though rulers or wealthy merchants who subscribed and relied on accuracy often did. From later fifteenth-century Rome wrote Giovanni Sabadino and Benedetto Dei, pioneers who vacuumed up and passed on information from papal courtiers, servants, diplomats, merchants, and bankers. Surviving sixteenth-century *avvisi*, as from Venetian Pompeo Roma, are in quarto format with eight pages arranged by origins of the information, for example, “News from London.”

Yet the Renaissance did not invent the newspaper. The closest thing, perhaps, was the *avviso*, a regular or semi-regular bulletin of news compiled by knowledgeable scribes and subscribed to for a fee. A number of producers are known, and since *avvisi* were handwritten rather than printed, they must have employed copyists to help prepare them. From 1554 the Duke of Urbino received weekly *avvisi* from Rome, but in 1572 and 1586 a papal decree banned all *avvisi* originating in Rome. The Urbino archive has a large number of these, such that the source of news has become a source for historians.

See also: *Arts*: Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Family and Gender*: Servants, Household; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Death in the Community; Foreign Communities; Health Commissions and Boards; Jewish Communities; Plague; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Politics and*

Warfare: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; City Halls; Crime and Punishments; Exile and Exiles; Rebellions and Revolts; Taxes and Public Finance; War and Civilians; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Taverns and Inns; *Religion and Beliefs*: Preachers and Preaching

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NOBLE PURSUITS

Perhaps 2 or 3 percent of Renaissance-era Italians claimed noble blood. They tended to live apart from commoners, in urban palazzi, and rural villas and castles. Some were wealthy and powerful leaders in society, while others had little more than their prestigious names. But names were meaningful. They opened doors of fellow elites, provided screens against certain types of prosecution, and entitled their holders to adopt lifestyles that included a good deal of leisure and were expected to provide an element of display in courts and city streets. Assuming a noble family had wealth, its peers, betters, and inferiors looked to it to adorn the city's streets with liveried servants and their own fashionable clothes, coaches, and colorfully caparisoned horses. Nobles' palazzi magnified street-scapes, and on festival days their windows were hung with colorful banners and carpets. Their funds paid for food, wine, and musicians, and their decorated parish chapels made local churches special destinations. Sometimes noble families' grounds, gardens, and parks were open to the public, providing even commoners enjoyment of civilizing landscapes.

But nobles mostly entertained each other. In Venice, Companies of the Stocking were clubs of young, politically neophyte noblemen that provided raucous banquets for members and women (eventually only wives). Wine, stories, and promises of political support and votes circulated for hours on end. Providing feasts for worthy guests was a standard occurrence at signorial courts, villas, and urban

palazzi. Hosts expended enormous resources on food, drink, decorations, musicians, and other entertainments.

Properly equipped villas and castles also hosted hunting parties that spectators might view from tall platforms. Food, ancient symbol of hospitality, filled outdoor tables whether or not the hunters had been successful. An occasion at Campo di Merlo in January 1484 included 550 mounted noble and courtier horsemen, 50 footmen (servants), and countless dogs that pursued stags and roebucks, while 50 horsemen (perhaps women and clerics) looked on. During the seven-hour event, hunters bagged 18 stags. Medici Pope Leo X was an avid hunter who had several parks (hunting preserves) in and around Rome, including the Vivariolum, located behind Rome's Baths of Diocletian. At the Medicis' Pratolino villa passive nobles watched as professionals and dogs cornered and wounded desired game that the lord then dispatched. Traditionally, dogs got the quarry's organs, host and guests the best meat, and huntsmen the remainder. Of course, nobles were responsible for breeding, training, and caring for the horses, and directing the training of dogs and even falcons, made popular in the south under Emperor Frederick II. The Gonzaga Dukes of Mantua were noted horse breeders, whose 650 studs (1488) hailed from North Africa, Spain, Sardinia, England, Ireland, and all over Italy. In the 1490s Duke Francesco Gonzaga bought Persian and Arabian breeds through Istanbul and raced them in Italy. Long associated with knights and cavalry and Roman emperors, horses made excellent gifts and horsemanship was a truly manly noble exhibition.

Jousting, quintessential sport of knights, was featured across Renaissance-era Italy at courts and as public spectacle. A tournament might entail the lists, which pitted two well-armored knights charging with blunted lances against each other, a wooden wall separating the horses. A variation had groups of horsemen charge each other and separate into one-on-one combats, often based on personal challenges. A third form pitted larger groups of horsemen against each other in a general *melée*. Noblemen involved displayed fine horsemanship but also strength, skill in martial arts, impressive armor, and fine clothing. Among sixteenth-century noblemen swordsmanship evolved into the precision martial dance known as fencing. Virtues of raw power and stamina were replaced with agility, grace, control, and timing, and the traditional flat swords with the flexible rapier. Masters set up schools and published manuals on the "art," as did Francesco Altoni (*Single Combat*, 1538).

Literary works such as Baldassare Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* catalogued and popularized the range of physical activities proper to noblemen. Such sports included swimming, gymnastics (including vaulting and use of the pommel horse), wrestling, and even tennis, played with rackets, paddles, or wooden arm guards on indoor courts with balls filled with down. The noble fascination with

sport had the intriguing effect of forcing young elites to rely on the greater experience and expertise of skilled commoners who taught, coached, and entertained them. Ferrara's duke had several tennis pros, all commoners, against whom he routinely competed. Less strenuous were board games such as chess or backgammon, card games, and gambling on just about anything. It is no coincidence that both chess and cards feature "royal" figures.

Noblewomen had far fewer options, whether at court or in humbler settings. They always provided rapt audiences for male performances from jousts and hunts to tennis matches. Dancing, singing, and performing on stringed or smaller keyboard instruments were prized skills for women. Castiglione specifically advises drawing, writing letters, and playing music for his courtly women. Even noblewomen learned various forms of needlework, and being able to tell stories and otherwise converse well was the mark of refinement. This last was bolstered with a growing catalogue of printed literature by and for noblewomen, from Books of Hours to chivalric romances. Less traditional women pursued contemporary scientific interests, especially alchemy, both alone and beside their husbands.

See also: *Arts:* Dance, Courtly; Music at Court; Women and the Arts; Women Poets and Their Poetry; *Family and Gender:* Families, Noble and Patrician; Health and Illness; Homosexuality; *Virtù* and Honor; *Fashion and Appearance:* Court, Fashion at; *Food and Drink:* Conduct at Table; Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community:* Gardens; Palazzi; Villas; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Gambling; Games and Pastimes; Sports, Contests, and Competitions; Women, Letters, and Letter Writing; *Religion and Beliefs:* Confraternities; *Science and Technology:* Academies; Alchemy; Collecting and Collections

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PETS

In Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* Shylock's runaway daughter reportedly traded her mother's ring for a pet monkey, a terrible blow to the old moneylender. That Italians had pet monkeys is confirmed by at least one painting, Masolino's *Healing of the Blind Man*, in which a leashed monkey walks across a palazzo's exterior ledge. The same work depicts two birdcages suspended from one of the ever-present horizontal poles. These are tiny details in an ostensibly religious work, but they speak to everyday life: people had pets.

Animals played many roles in Italian society. They were raised or caught and butchered for food; they served as pack animals and drew carts and carriages and cannon; they propelled grindstones, and carried men into battle and brides to their new homes; or were sheared for their wool or skinned for their fur. But none of these can be considered pets, as basic labor—or sacrifice—was expected of them. Horses, birds, and dogs used for hunting come closer, and some owners may have formed attachments to some of them, but they were still utilitarian.

Zoos existed in Renaissance-era Italy, though they were usually the property of a ruler who gave only limited access to the public. Some of the animals would have been gifts from other rulers, and many were exotics that had trouble adjusting to the northern climate. Lorenzo de' Medici kept a menagerie at his villa at Poggio a Caiano; one of its residents was a giraffe. There was a papal zoo, at least under popes who appreciated the concept. Florence kept a live lion, the Marzocco, in a cage on display. It was and is one of the main symbols for the city.

The true pet was valued simply for its being, and being under the control of a human. The pet did what it did naturally, though often constrained to keep

it from harm or escape. Leashes were of leather, and cages could be of iron, brass, or wood. Birds might be simple songbirds that added a bit of the countryside to an urban residence, or they could be more exotic, such as parrots or parakeets. In his studiolo in Urbino, decorated in the 1470s, the duke had the walls decorated with *intarsia* depicting objects that were presumably his. Among these is a hexagonal brass bird cage with two exquisitely crafted parakeets perched in little swings. That this was an actual artifact is suggested by the bird feeder that displays the ruler's coat-of-arms. Of course, dogs could be trained, and hunting and other manuals provided tips. An unexpected one is Giovanni Batista della Porta's *Natural Magic*. In Book Two he discusses the breeding of "pretty little dogs to play with." One can be trained to do tricks by giving it an ape to play with and learn from. Even better is mating a small dog with an ape or a fox, said Della Porta.

Small birds regularly appear in religious art, and not only as the dove of the Holy Spirit. Many of the period's Madonnas have Mary, Jesus, or St. John gently cradling one. Birds had long been symbols of human souls, so at least one meaning of such a work is clear. But there must have also been a resonance of these domestic scenes in the everyday lives of viewers.

Cats and dogs also appear regularly in art. Both were good predators to have around, and dogs cleaned up whatever food scraps remained. Dogs gnaw bones, follow children, spar with cats, or simply are present. For their parts, cats are generally engaged with a ball of yarn, or just self-absorbed and aloof. All of this is evidence that painters took their cues from life. But sometimes a dog is just a symbol. In the famous Van Eyck double portrait of the *Arnolfini Wedding*, a lap dog occupies the foreground. Clearly it was included because of its symbolism of



The famous painting of the languid ladies or courtesans (1490 or 1510) by Venetian Vittore Carpaccio (1465–1525/6) shows the women amid their pet birds and dogs. Oil on canvas. (DeAgostini/Getty Images)

faithfulness. But was it a fiction or did Mrs. Arnolfini actually own such an animal? The specificity of breed speaks to the latter, but there is no way of telling.

A famous work of Leonardo features a beautiful young woman cradling an ermine. Again, there is no way of knowing whether the woman depicted actually had such a pet, or whether the artist merely included it for its rather suggestively sensuous quality and beautiful coat. People are known to have made pets of ermines, as well as stoats and ferrets. Because they can be quite elusive, they were often walked on leashes attached to collars or harnesses. Ferrets were also particularly good rabbit hunters. In a fifteenth-century work, artist Domenico di Bartolo includes a young dandy with a pleated tunic and showy hat and a fur collar. On closer examination, the collar has a head, and the head is arched up: his “collar” is a live ferret, presumably a pet.

Pets were more often associated with women and children than grown men, at least if one follows the artistic record and sets hunting dogs aside. A good example is an image of two bored courtesans by Venetian painter Vittore Carpaccio. The seated women stare off as they distractedly acknowledge the presence of two dogs, ignoring a pheasant and a couple of doves in the background. Though this does not seem to carry any symbolism, one wonders when reading a literary “letter” addressed to a courtesan by Andrea Calmo. He wrote of her “parrots, jays, larks, cardinals, pheasants, doves, Persian cats, squirrels, martens, guinea pigs, and monkeys” (Lawner, 62). Did she really have all these pets, or was Calmo making reference to her many customers?

See also: *Arts*: Art, Sacred; Daily Life in Art; Portraits; *Family and Gender*: Childhood; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Noble Pursuits

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PORNOGRAPHY AND EROTICA

Pornography aroused lust; erotica presented sex as loving; obscenity prompted disgust; while the bawdy used sex to amuse; or so wrote Roger Thompson in 1978.

However useful his distinctions, depictions of sexual matters played important roles in Renaissance culture. Images of a sexual nature decorated papal apartments, courtesans' quarters, nobles' bedrooms, inns, whorehouses, bathhouses, and taverns. The advent of the print and illustrated book put masterpieces of highly sexualized paintings, sculptures, narratives, and poetry cheaply into the hands of anyone interested. They also disseminated crude pornography, misogynistic homoerotica, and gratuitous sexual humor.

Bawdy songs, poetry, novellas, and even episodes in epics made fun of the lustful or sexually desperate; of old men chasing beautiful, younger women; and women fleecing the sexually naïve. Giovanni Boccaccio set the scene with his ribald short stories that flavor the *Decameron* (1353). Even a papal secretary and Florentine chancellor, Poggio Bracciolini, collected humorous sketches, jokes, and narratives celebrating the foolish side of lust and adultery (*Facetiae*, printed 1470).

In 1425 the Epicurean classicist Antonio Beccadelli (aka Panormita) dedicated his *Hermaphroditus* to Cosimo de' Medici. Fittingly it had two sections, one devoted to male homosexual intercourse and the second to heterosexual activities. It was erudite pornographic fantasy written in fine Latin evoking classical poets such as Catullus and Ovid. Though it gained a following among humanists, it was condemned by moralists, including Pope Eugenius IV and burned publicly in Bologna, Ferrara, and Mantua in the 1430s. Beccadelli formally apologized for the work. Even so, between 1469 and 1517 printers produced 22 editions of the Classical sexual work *Priapeia*, which also survives in 75 manuscript versions. First copied by Boccaccio, it was thought to have been created by Roman poet Ovid or Vergil.

Literary academies, such as the Intronati in Siena, could be hotbeds of sexual expression and literary—and perhaps sexual—experimentation. The *Book of the Prick* by Vignali (1520s) is openly homoerotic and misogynistic, and was probably not meant to be published. Reflecting contemporary Platonism, the book has older men lecture younger on the joys of sex and then shifts to a rude and allegorical battle of genitalia representing contemporary political parties. In 1539 Intronati member Alessandro Piccolomini published *La Raffaella*. Here two women discuss explicitly how to seduce men other than their husbands in a tone that is erotic rather than pornographic.

Positions began life as a series of 16 printed sheets of explicit depictions of heterosexual intercourse. Artists Giulio Romano drafted the images, and Marcantonio Raimondi cut the plates. Roman censors seized the sheets, but defiant printers soon put them in book form, with accompanying sonnets by pornographic poet Pietro Aretino. He attacked critics who had sex all the time but disdained and forbade depictions of such activities. In his own poetic *Dialogues* (1534/6) we listen to a whore and her daughter discuss the comparative merits of becoming a nun, wife,

or whore. Though a highly accomplished poet, he uses the coarse terminology of the tavern. Also attributed to Aretino is the *Dialogue of Julia and Madelein*. Here subjects range from lesbianism to prostitution and anal intercourse, while some 35 sexual positions are carefully described. This is outdone by Lorenzo Venier's *The Wandering (or Erring) Whore* from about 1531, which refers to no fewer than 72 positions.

Sexual variety was celebrated in works such as those by poets Francesco Berni and Francesco Molza of Modena. Using the rich Italian vocabulary for matters sexual, the pair compare the tastes for pears (penises), peaches (boys' rears), plums (vaginas), and cherries (anuses). It comes down to boys versus women (figs) as objects of sexual desire. Elsewhere Italian writers euphemized the male member as parsnip, carrot, cucumber, sausage, eel, and lance. In paintings sometimes a vegetable is just a vegetable, but fifteenth-century painter Carlo Crivelli had a taste for gratuitously including gourds and cucumbers, even in religious works.

Pleasuring Oneself

In the Bible (Genesis 38), Onan had an erection and handled it himself rather than defiling a woman or himself with another man. Onanism is thus another word for masturbation. For Christians, "spilling one's seed" was contrary to nature and thus sinful, but mild if compared with sodomy or fornication. From a physician's standpoint, Onan could have been self-medicating, since he considered purging superfluous bodily fluids as healthy; too much, though, was enervating. Some women's "complaints" were medically treated with manual self-stimulation or by massaging midwives, which helped release pent-up humors such as menses, normally a happy result of regular marital coitus; or so the era's doctors taught.

Classical mythology, revived and popularized with humanism, provided ample material for artists and poets. Sixteenth-century painters Rosso Fiorentino, Agostino Carracci, and Perino del Vaga each produced *Loves of the Gods*, which were engraved and circulated as sexual images. Perino's appeared in the 1580s, complete with visible genitalia and accompanying verses. Were paintings such as Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* or Titian's *Venus of Urbino* or *Danaë* merely titillating or erotic or meant to arouse lust? Such works were, of course, private, though print mongers made them famous. Mere nudity was not the point, many decided, since no one considered Michelangelo's *David* inappropriate; nor were most images of naked Eve troubling. Debate specifically surrounded the *Hall of Psyche* (1527–1530) at the Mantua Palazzo del Tè of Duke Federico II Gonzaga, painted by Giulio

Romano of *Positions* fame. Sexuality is presented in “hot” colors that seem to emphasize the physical nature of what had previously been allegorized, especially in the *Marriage of Cupid and Psyche*. But was this merely an earthy treatment of a classical myth, a Neo-platonic message relating sexual love to divine love, or high class porn? Perhaps all three were intended.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Courtly; Daily Life in Art; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender*: Fertility, Conception, and Contraception; Homosexuality and Sodomy; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Reading; *Religion and Beliefs*: Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Preachers and Preaching

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Prostitutes. See Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade

READING

People read many things for many reasons. Physicians, theologians, lawyers, and arts professors read books in Latin as part of their working lives; priests and monks read from Latin religious texts during Mass and other liturgies; merchants read their vernacular account books. But people also read for pleasure, a practice that greatly expanded during the Renaissance era. For this the chief innovation was printing.

First, people had to be able to read. Literacy remained a characteristic largely of the urban elite, though cities could boast high levels even among the working

classes. Church and communal schools supplemented home reading lessons in Latin, and apprentices in many fields were taught to read and write for business success. Girls might be taught in the home or in convent schools, or later by their husbands. With printing came much cheaper primers and readers, in both Latin and Italian, aimed at children, men, and even women; literacy rates rose accordingly.

While books were still being produced solely by hand (manuscripts), they remained expensive and relatively rare. Even among literate common folk they rarely appeared. Even a plain book might cost over a week's wages for a skilled laborer. Many books circulated by being copied by readers who had the necessary skills or the money to pay a copyist. Along with business and personal correspondence, Christian devotional works filled most people's few reading hours. Manuscript copies of vernacular poetry, chivalric romances, and short stories, or *novelle*, are found alongside versions of saint's lives and popular sermons in the wills of literate artisans, merchants, and patricians alike. Since men controlled the money, authors and copyists targeted husbands, especially with works on management and leadership and classical heroes. Reading aloud remained a norm for many, and clearly this could entail an audience of family, friends, or neighbors. A racy book such as Boccaccio's *Decameron* no doubt found eager listeners.

With printing, after about 1460, came not only much less expensive editions of books, but shops with ready stock and many more options for book formats, sizes, and decoration. Inventories show that some shops carried over 100 titles and dozens of copies of each. With printing came title pages, pagination, tables of contents, and indexes. Printers experimented with various typefaces (Roman, Italic, Humanist) and sizes to fit the variety of book sizes, from full sheet folio (2 pages) to the more efficient quarto (4 pages) to the very inexpensive 24-page from one full sheet layout. Potential buyers could browse and even sit and read in the shop. Sales in one Paduan outlet averaged almost ten books per day over four years in the 1480s, and 25 per day in January 1488. Printers and booksellers encouraged new customers by offering very cheap editions of reading manuals and readers.

During the sixteenth century increasing numbers of rural folk and even peasants began to learn to read from such works, guided by local priests, notaries, overseers, and the occasional literate landlady. Such customers might purchase inexpensive books in big city or town shops, or from itinerant book-peddlers who passed through. Smaller formats meant sellers could shelve, store, or carry many more individual copies.

References to books and reading appear in inventories, letters, sermons, stories, and journals, and many painted portraits show—usually upper-class male—sitters reading or with a book in hand, an inserted finger keeping his place. Reading came to indicate nobility and sophistication, and not merely clerical or professional status. Of course, owning books does not always mean reading books. On the other

hand, a book listed in a palace inventory may have been read by many, including visitors, children, and staff. Given the intellectual climate privileging humanism, classics in Greek and Latin carried the highest status, but probably had the fewest readers. Among books printed before 1500 (*incunabulae*), roughly half of known works in Italian were on religious subjects, including sermons, saints' lives, mystics' writings, Books of Hours, prayer books, and even a translation of the Bible.

Many religious works were designed for women's use, and produced in smaller size—though sometimes lavish—formats more easily handled. Beginning with the *Decameron*, *novelle* often aimed to entertain women with naughty stories, as did other new literary genres including romances—in poetry and prose—and some literary letter collections. Useful works on household matters also targeted women; these included books on household management, cookery, domestic medicine, and books of “secrets” that gathered helpful hints, recipes, remedies, and other useful stuff. Of course, these later books were probably not read for entertainment, which would have suited certain clerical critics of women reading.

Pietro Aretino: “Teller of Truth”

Pietro (1492–1556) had humble beginnings and little formal education, but became the first commercially successful writer, arguably first journalist, gossip blogger, and pornographer. He started in Rome and Mantua, finally settling in Venice. His mature reputation was for no-holds-barred criticism of authority, literary celebrations of every sort of sexual activity, and shameless self-promotion. He was a highly skilled poet and playwright, and produced *Dialogues* (1534, 1536), in which women compare being a housewife, nun, and whore. His publication of graphic sex described with gutter slang created a new literary genre copied by many and read by many more.

Male readers had a wider variety of choices, though many women probably read these as well. Histories, reports of contemporary events, chivalric epic poems, self-help manuals, translations of classical literature, scientific works, travel literature, biographies, *novelle*, and pornography were increasingly available through the sixteenth century. Catholic religious works continued to dominate the market, however, especially during the Catholic Reformation.

See also: *Arts*: Novella; Women Poets and Their Poetry; *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender*: Education of Children; Health and Illness; Last Wills and Testaments; *Food and Drink*: Literature of Food and Cooking; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Calendars: Sacred and Profane; Music and

Dance in Popular Culture; News; Pornography and Erotica; Songs and Singing, Popular; Women, Letters, and Letter Writing; *Religion and Beliefs*: Preachers and Preaching; *Science and Technology*: Libraries; Secrets, Books of

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Sex Trade. *See* Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade

SONGS AND SINGING, POPULAR

Everybody sang. Peasants in the fields sang, as did choirs in churches, gondoliers, *laudesi* confraternity members, servants doing chores, lovers, street vendors, courtesans and prostitutes, tavern crowds, galley oarsmen, cloistered nuns, processing guildsmen, slaves, soldiers on the march, and mothers to their babies. People sang to relieve boredom, maintain a rhythm, tell stories, praise God, impress others, express feelings, gain attention, entertain, celebrate, and as a group pastime. They sang in every Italian dialect, and in Spanish, French, Catalan, Greek, Provençal, German, Latin, Slavic languages, Yiddish and Hebrew, Turkish and Arabic. They sang traditional tunes and lyrics: with themes religious, rebellious, romantic, silly, sad, nostalgic, satiric, pornographic, and patriotic. Some sang the latest compositions that appeared on printed broadsheets or in collections of madrigals. Some

sang in groups and others alone; some sang to themselves, while others were paid to entertain. Some had fine voices, no doubt, while others should have just moved their lips; but they sang. Everybody sang.

There is little in the way of evidence for song at home among the lower classes, but inventories and other household records do exist for those higher up. One study of Venetian homes reveals that those above poverty had one or more musical instruments and many had music books. The widespread ownership of music books—in the city where most were printed—at least implies that the owners could read the texts. One would like to think that they could also read the notation, both to shape the words and to pick out the music on the lute or keyboard. Of course, having these musical tools at home did not mean that they were necessarily used at home. The owner could have performed with an ensemble or consort of instrumentalists or singers (or both), or they could have been purely for show, as we know musical instruments were a popular form of décor.

Celebratory gatherings such as weddings drew people from the village or neighborhood as well as from three or more generations. Singing and dancing were typical activities, and would have reflected the local traditions and musical memory to be inclusive. Celebrations accompanied victories in Venetian bridge battles, Siena's Palio race, or a game of *calcio*, and songs must have enlivened the celebrations. Though none of these songs survives, one can easily imagine the chants and musical taunts that the victors brought back to their neighborhood feasts, or that followed ample celebratory drinking.

Much musical entertainment at court was performed by hired professionals, but even at a court that prized excellence in music, such as Ferrara's, courtiers, ducal family members, and others with even moderate talent sang. Some of this was in a group, and some of this was from music books of new and older monophonic and polyphonic compositions. The Italian language had developed or borrowed many poetic forms, and each of these could be put to music by professional composers or talented amateurs. Add an accompanying lute or lira da braccio and a bit of improvisation, and the result could be quite pleasing. One specific musical form that followed this development was the later fifteenth-century solo *frotola*, whose lyrics and tunes were eventually formalized and printed. This was the first purely Italian song form and was championed by Mantua's Marquisa Isabella d'Este. Polyphonic madrigals developed in musical circles in Rome and Florence around the 1520s. These were more complex compositions, usually for four voices, with or without accompaniment, but could be sung by professionals or amateurs able to read music. By the 1540s their appearance in print made them widely available to the musically inclined from aristocrats to well-off artisans.

Singing also echoed off the walls and pavements of city streets. Some made a living singing the poetry of others, such as Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, which

was performed across Italy. *Cantastorie* (story-singers) and bench-singers regaled audiences with their own compositions from platforms in *piazze*. Using familiar tunes, they sang of recent events, local history, scandals, and other noteworthy matters to draw crowds and sell their inexpensive broadsheets or even printed fans as souvenirs. Venetian gondoliers famously sang as part of their service. Vendors sang to draw attention to their stalls or shops or carts that moved slowly through the city. Prostitutes sang from their windows to accomplish the same goal. Part of a courtesan's service was entertainment that may or may not have been erotic, and some were quite accomplished musicians or singers.

Religious festivals included music both in church and out. While some was sophisticated polyphony, there were plenty of popular hymns and lauds—songs usually addressed to the Virgin Mary. No doubt the irreverent parodied the sentiments of these by singing spiritual themes to secular tunes, and vice versa. These probably became more amusing with the consumption of wine. Lay religious confraternities regularly sang lauds in their chapels, but these often became popular as part of shared local musical heritage. One observer witnessed peasants headed to their fields singing a catchy laud that all of them knew. Carnival, too, brought out old standbys and new compositions for revelers to pick up. Even Lorenzo de' Medici composed naughty songs to be sung outside unmarried ladies' windows. He sang them, too. Everybody sang.

See also: *Arts*: Music at Church; Music at Court; Musical Instruments; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Neighborhood and Parish; Villages and Village Life; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Games and Pastimes; Music and Dance in Popular Culture; Street Entertainment; Taverns and Inns; Weddings; *Religion and Beliefs*: Confraternities; Mary, Cult of

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SPORTS, CONTESTS, AND COMPETITIONS

Competitive sport implies a voluntary physical struggle or contest according to agreed-upon rules, between two or more opponents, the outcome of which is meaningful but largely symbolic. Injuries and even deaths may occur but are incidental to the action and are not its goal. Renaissance-era records reveal that almost always males were the antagonists, and when women were involved, they competed among themselves and not against men. Italians participated in organized events and ad hoc displays of personal virtù, racing with an opponent on foot, horseback, or swimming, or stripping and wrestling until one opponent surrendered. At stake might be honor or reputation, a bet, a valued prize, or the simple pride of victory. Some sports were highly ritualized and involved up to scores of men, and some were regularly performed as part of annual or special civic festivities. Some sports, such as jousting, were restricted to the aristocracy, while only lower-class men clashed in organized rock-throwing fights in city streets. The latter required little in the way of preparation or training, while such sports as fencing, archery, shooting, and the equestrian arts—derived from military activities—required skill and practice. Sport in Renaissance-era Italy presented a rich tapestry of the thrill of victory and agony of defeat.

Organized competition among quarters of a city took many forms, among them horse races (*palii*), the ball game *calcio*, and street battles among small armies of residents. Though Siena's Palio is the best known urban horse race today, 500 years ago *palii* were run across Italy. The palio itself was a silk scarf or banner usually worth 20 to 40 florins. Courses were set out along streets or within *piazze*, such as Santa Croce in Florence, Piazza Navone in Rome, or Siena's Piazza Pubblico (from 1605). Siena had three and Florence at least four races a year, and both locals and foreigners competed. In the 1480s the brother of the Florentine apothecary and diarist Luca Landucci won 20 *palii* in Florence, Arezzo, and Siena riding a Barbary horse named Draghetto. Luca wrote that his brother died from the effort.

Around 1460 Giovanni Frescobaldi wrote a poetic *Game of Calcio* from the viewpoint of a Florentine spectator. More serious was Giovanni Bardi's *Discourse on Calcio* (1580) in which his era's rules and regulations were recorded. The original tempestuous rugby-like sport involved two teams controlling and moving an inflated ball across a goal line. Under the Medici dukes, play was formalized and overseen by Masters of Calcio: each side's 27 players wore livery-like uniforms, assumed specific positions on the field, and were penalized for passing the ball above opponents' heads. Early random street play was "professionalized" and limited to soldiers, though favored aristocrats up to age 45 could compete. Matches occurred during Carnival and to impress foreign visitors. Other cities had their own versions, such as Siena's *pallone*, which was defiantly played during the Spanish siege of 1555.

Less recognizable as sport today were sanctioned street fights—Battle of the Bridge (Pisa), Battle of Stones (Perugia), Elmora (Siena), Battle of the Fists (Gubbio, Venice)—between groups of men who usually represented a neighborhood or civic quarter. Roots were both in late medieval civic violence among civic factions and in militia training to defend the city. Perugia's organizing Society of the Stone oversaw five companies representing its five gates. Contests, held from March 1 through May in a *piazza*, first pitted teams wearing helmets, cloaks, and greaves, armed only with rocks they hurled at opponents. After came more heavily armored "infantry" with staffs and shields. Young men fought from sunrise to 9:00 AM, "children" followed from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM, and from then until sundown as many as 2,000 adults fought in a general melee. The bishop tried unsuccessfully to end the ritual in 1372, but it continued

Siena's Palio

Siena's still-popular horserace originated around 1500 with nobles racing during celebration of the festival of Mary's Assumption. Since the 1540s each of Siena's 17 *contrade* (wards) has entered a horse and bareback rider for the three laps of the central *piazza*. Ten horses compete: seven that did not run the previous race and three by lot. The prize is a banner—the *palio*—painted with Mary's image. Steeped in history, the event is communal and religious: horses are blessed, the bishop says a special Mass, and the winning *contrada*'s church displays the *palio*. It celebrates Siena's political divisions and civic unity.

until 1425 when preacher St. Bernardino of Siena convinced Perugini to cease. Several cities held “games of fists,” in which combatants were limited to using their hands as weapons. Venetians famously battled over control of a bridge, in the process dunking or drowning numerous players. Like Florentine *calcio*, these were sometimes staged for foreign dignitaries. Even sophisticated Florence staged rock-throwing battles from at least 1367. In 1582 a battle celebrating a Medici wedding resulted in many wounded and dead, and ended only when soldiers intervened.

Other popular sports included pome (nude red rover), palla (soccer, from mid-sixteenth century), pall mall (mallet ball, croquet), and bocce (lawn bowling). Pallacorda, or indoor tennis, required a leather ball filled with down and a court, and was often limited to noble courts. The Church banned bullfights and other blood sports in 1590, though racing donkeys, geese, buffalo, and other animals continued. As for women’s sports, English visitor Thomas Coryate mentioned six or seven girls tossing a ball among themselves, a spectacle that drew over 1,000 spectators, including gentlemen.

See also: *Arts: Daily Life in Art; Family and Gender: Health and Illness; Virtù and Honor; Fashion and Appearance: Livery; Housing and Community: City Streets and Piazze; Neighborhood and Parish; Recreation and Social Customs: Carnival; Civic Festivals; Gambling; Noble Pursuits; Weddings*

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STREET ENTERTAINMENT

In Italy life was lived in the streets and *piazze*. Much may have happened behind closed doors, but this was of no one else's concern. Except in the heat of a summer day, streets bustled with activity. Some of it was economic, religious, or political, but this did not mean it could not also be entertaining. Some activities were meant to amuse, while others simply did. The daily arguments between the drunk tailor and his half-deaf wife never failed to bring smiles.

Marketplaces occupied *piazze* and wide spots in the streets. Sellers at formal markets usually had their goods taxed, so much was peddled along streets and byways. Both market and street sellers had to draw attention to their wares, and did so verbally, by rhythmic patter and poetry and songs, often handed down. To grab the ears of women working behind closed doors, street sellers employed bells or clappers in the way that ice cream trucks repeat tunes today. While adults might try to ignore the little performances, one can imagine children running out to see the vendor, especially if he or she had a donkey cart. Specific merchandise was hawked



In the early 1620s French graphic artist Jacques Callot (1592–1635) visited Florence where he sketched and eventually etched images of Neapolitan dancers performing the dances called the *'sfessania*. Performers were characters in popular comedy, here identified as the woman Riciulina and the lute-playing Metzenin. (Culture Club/Getty Images)

in the streets, especially on market and festival days. Charlatans and mountebanks ascended their platforms to tout the amazing, incredible, unbelievable qualities of their potions, lotions, and cures from beyond the oceans. The really good ones put on virtual shows, with jugglers, fire-eaters and other stunt-people to help gather a crowd for the pitch. Poets and authors seeking to sell copies of their works would read from them, often in a church or other enclosed space. On a Sunday afternoon, though, one might mount an outdoor pulpit, unused float, or other platform and do his best to gain listeners and customers.

The streets were theaters of religious ritual as well. That abandoned pulpit had probably been used by a mendicant friar who took advantage of fine weather to present his message to whatever crowd would gather. Or his presentation may have been scheduled and part of a Lenten series of sermons sponsored by the bishop. The float may have belonged to a confraternity of laymen whose contribution to the day's events was a procession and singing of familiar hymns. There may have been several such floats, each competing with the others for decoration and quality of performance. For best effect, an ensemble of drums, trumpets, fifes, and trombone-like sackbuts traveling on the float might have played between choral sets or accompanying them. During Carnival and on other special occasions the floats or stages might have hosted dramatic performances, usually presented by confraternity brothers or youth groups associated with them. These ranged from simple skits to elaborately staged productions on Christian themes. Simpler processions might occur every other day as charitable organizations, confraternities, orphanages, parishes, and other religious groups took to the streets on their patron saints' days or other holydays.

Other processions were less festive, as a funeral cortege transporting a corpse to church or a procession accompanying a condemned man to the gallows. While these may not have been as fun as the procession taking a bride to her new home, they were entertainment of a morbid sort to those looking on. More genuinely amusing were the criminals condemned to be paraded through the streets naked or otherwise shamefully made up. The ridicule they drew was meant to be a kind of social cleanser. Truly impressive processions filled the streets when a ruler married or a pope visited. State funeral processions, too, could include hundreds of ranked marchers, music, and the pageantry of liveried horsemen.

Such festivities could last for days or weeks and fill streets with revelers who were fed and provided drink by the noble or civic hosts. *Piazze* became the sites of animal fights, races, firework displays, jousting, and very real battles between teams of neighborhood men. In Venice such groups fought for "control" of local bridges. On smaller scales, elite family weddings usually spilled into the streets adjoining the groom's family palazzo. In one Florentine case the kitchen was moved into the street because the allotted space inside was too small. Even the

working classes hosted weddings that were essentially public, with streets closed off and tables covered with food and drink. Any such would necessarily include music and dancing. Honor demanded it.

Finally, there were professional entertainers at least some of whose performances graced the streets and *piazze*. In Venice *buffoni* entertained crowds from *piazze* to the doge's table, but only during Carnival. These artisan-class but literate performers were masters of acrobatics, singing, prop comedy, improvisational theater, impersonation of minority stereotypes and dialects, magic tricks, and even horsemanship. Year-round performers included troupes that performed in closed venues but gave the public a taste of their range and talents in open-air teasers. This was the origin of the characteristically Italian *commedia dell'arte*. Also popular were the *cantastorie*, or singers of stories or history. They composed songs or poems on contemporary political or social events or topics of general local interest. They then had broadsheets or pamphlets of the texts printed up. Accompanying themselves or with a partner, they sang their works in public and sold the printed sheets to gin up interest and as souvenirs. On any given day, the streets of a major city were anything but boring.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Music at Church; Music at Court; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; Novella; *Economics and Work*: Retail Selling; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Politics and Warfare*: Crime and Punishments; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Music and Dance in Popular Culture; Songs and Singing, Popular; Sports, Contests, and Competitions; Theater, Popular; Theater, Religious; *Religion and Beliefs*: Confraternities; Preachers and Preaching

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TAVERNS AND INNS

Renaissance-era Italians were both a people on the move and hosts to foreigners from across Europe and the Mediterranean. Providing food and shelter to travelers,

recent immigrants, itinerants, visiting merchants, and others was an ancient business. Though traveling mendicants found the nearest convent, foreign merchants their *fondaco*, nobles the court or villa, others sought the inns, taverns, and wine-shops where they might find a room, a meal, good company, an easy mark, or a sexual encounter. Italian families famously dined together, but when a single young man needed a meal, he hit the neighborhood or village establishment that provided hot food and cool wine for a small price. German merchants newly arrived in Milan, Spanish laborers in Naples, or Turkish sailors in Bari quickly discovered where their kinsmen ate and drank, and found familiar foods as well as voices. Venice featured wineshops that specialized in serving sweet Greek *malvasia* wine; the type became famous and gave its name to six city streets.

Rome had Italy's best developed hospitality sector, given the constant streams of pilgrims, diplomats, clerics and their entourages, favor-seekers, merchants, and scalawags. By 1600, 7 million liters of wine entered annually through Rome's gates and were taxed (how much more entered and was not?). Sixteenth-century Rome had a guild of wine retailers who directly serviced customers and a second guild of wholesalers who provided wine to the city's estimated 120 inns, 240 taverns, and countless small wineshops. Private vineyards, too, offered their own stock to customers. Native Romans owned inns and taverns, but relied on foreign managers who catered to fellow countrymen.

Roman inns could be squalid affairs suited to the humblest pilgrim, or rather fine places with several rooms that appealed to upper-class visitors. Inns differed from other establishments by offering a bed and bedding, though privacy in one's bed was rarely assured. In 1564 papal authorities released innkeepers from responsibility for loss or destruction of any items not specifically secured by the management. Cities often required innkeepers to record and report their guests, with an eye to controlling the import of taxable goods. Rome adopted the practice only after 1550. To drum up business, innkeepers frequented the city's great basilica churches, magnets to newly arrived pilgrims. Eventually Roman authorities banned the practice.

To poor pilgrims Roman taverns offered space on the floor to sleep and perhaps a straw sack for a mattress; in 1501, 41 licensed straw sellers provided the necessary filling. Little is known of tavern food, but it is a safe bet that bread, cheese, and a thickened vegetable soup was typical fare. Customers might be local or passing through, and taverns were known as much for entertainment as for food and drink. They were famous for singing and dancing, gaming, gambling, robbery, fencing stolen goods, pimping, and, of course, drunkenness. In cities such as Rome or Florence, taverns were often located next to houses of prostitution, making such areas especially notorious. Because they drew the honest, the naïve, the newly arrived,

the runaways, the unmarried but pregnant, taverns also attracted fugitives, criminals, prostitutes, pimps, and scam artists.

In Florence, taverns were believed to be centers of illicit homosexual activity. Though modern researchers have found no evidence of “gay bars” per se, Florentine laws speak to the city’s fears. Since young boys were drawn to sweets, and “sodomites” were drawn to young boys, taverns were forbidden to sell sweets. Under the influence of puritanical preacher Savonarola, laws forbade service in taverns to boys or men known to be sodomites and forced city taverns to close early since immoral activity was known to thrive in darkness. When the government became serious, a stream of cooks, barmen, and tavern- and inn-keepers were incriminated for facilitating sodomy or being sodomites.

In the port city of Genoa, the year 1588 saw a new regime of wine provision. To that point wine wholesalers distributed their product through inns and taverns to all comers. Now five magistrates were appointed to oversee 17 new state-regulated distribution points. Prices were set, and Genoese citizens were forbidden to purchase wine or even food in local taverns and inns, which were now heavily regulated and restricted to non-citizens. Wine prices were set, and places of hospitality had to post their food and drink prices publicly. Despite inspections, government officials received reports of spoiled or diluted wine, as well as the usual immorality associated with taverns and inns. To avoid prosecution for serving locals *in* their establishments, managers began setting tables outside, in the street or lane.

But taverns and inns did not only host the sordid and unsavory. They were vital centers of community where one heard the latest news, gossip, rumors, and predictions. They provided forums for political and religious discussion. Travelers provided reports of weather, war, brigands, and the progress of plague. Village taverns provided relaxation and a break from routine, even if one saw the same faces every day.

Country inns and taverns, like rural life in general, avoided some of the stigmas associated with their urban cousins. Sometimes these were little more than outsized farmhouses with an empty back room. Tired horses could be fed or fresh ones rented. Meals were whatever the family was eating and helping with chores might replace a money payment by poorer travelers. Much more formal and comfortable dining and accommodations might be found along the main roads connecting major cities. These might have featured stables, a dining room, bedrooms, and storage areas. Food was fresh, often grown in the inn’s own garden. Yet, even these were far from modern: strangers ate from the same plates, slept fully clothed in the same beds, in which they shared parasites and germs.

See also: Arts: Novella; Economics and Work: Trade Routes, Overland; Family and Gender: Health and Illness; Homosexuality and Sodomy; Food and Drink:

Eating Out; Foreign Foods; *Housing and Community*: Foreign Communities; Villages and Village Life; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Drunkenness; Gambling; News; Songs and Singing, Popular

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THEATER, POPULAR

There was a good deal of overlap across popular comedy, Church-produced serious religious plays, and those developed and performed at court and before other privileged groups. Upper-class audiences enjoyed all three, and some actors had the ability to perform in any of the genres. Popular comedy had its roots in impromptu street farce, but by the end of the Renaissance era it had absorbed elements of character and plot from formal drama. Nonetheless, each was a distinct art form, and no one would have mistaken *commedia dell'arte* for a *sacre rappresentazione* (religious play) or a revival of a Latin comedy by the classical Roman playwright Plautus.

Holidays and market days brought locals and visitors alike into Italy's streets and *piazze*. Among the delights were the performers, whose juggling, acrobatics, fire-eating, story-singing, fortune-telling, animal acts, miming, faked healings, and declamations of Dante entertained one and all. Two or three leather-lunged male part-time street actors, or charlatans, with a few props and bits of symbolic costume, tied together skits based on the conflicts of well-understood stock characters: lovers and spouses (one necessarily in drag), servant and master, peasant and con man. Simple, predictable plotting with improvised lines was combined with heavy doses of shouted lines, exaggerated accents, and slapstick activity. Florence,

Bologna, Modena, Siena, and Ferrara shared a tradition of Maggio (May) plays performed at festivals that blended spring themes with exaggerated dialects and stage play, easily followed plots, wizards and magic, and even the devil. If skilled and lucky, the actors' antics might draw the attention of those planning private banquets or other festivities whose moods could be lightened with staged revelry. While such small ensembles continued throughout the Renaissance era to thread their ways from *piazza* to hall and town to city, they gave birth to one of Italy's great performance traditions.

From the 1540s *commedia dell'arte* emerged in the Veneto region from a blending of classical Roman stock-character-based comedy, improvisational theater, and a regional form of highly physical street entertainment. Usually working solo, Venetian clowns such as Domenico Taiacalze and Zuan Polo Liomparadi became famous around 1500 for their rapid-fire antics combining costumes, musical instruments, props, a wide range of foreign voices and gestures, and imitations of women, children, and even animals. One surviving description of the latter called his performance ridiculous and strange, and he is known to have hawked copies of his printed book of poetry to his audience. Later sixteenth-century *buffoni* such as Ruzante and Andrea Calmo crossed over to write and perform for the theater proper and *commedia dell'arte*. Its performers were professional craftspeople organized into troupes, whose incomes came from their acting, and who traveled around Italy and beyond. At first all-male, they quickly hired actresses, whose presence not only broadened the range of plots in their repertoires but also greatly increased audience interest. To the rather traditional characters, or "masks," of the old man, male servants, and physician or quack were thus added young lovers, old wife, courtesan, female servant, and maid; later came the braggart "Captain" and Arlecchino or Harlequin, who was invented by Tristano Martinelli of the Raccolti troupe in the mid-1580s. The earliest troupe contract dates from Padua in 1545. One Ser Maphio was the impresario and an actor, leading seven other male actors. They divided profits evenly and performed in Padua, Treviso, Venice, and Rome between Easter and Carnival. This meant they probably did not act together during the high acting season of Carnival, and could hire out as performers for lucrative banquets and official festivities. Later troupes included the Confidanti, Desiosi, Raccolti, Uniti, and the famous Gelosi.

Since open-air performances made ticketing difficult, *arte* troupes preferred indoor public venues. When one of these was not available, they would perform on open stages in *piazze* and collect what they could, knowing that if a working-class viewer liked what he saw he might be willing to spend a bit to help fill a hall, such as Florence's so-called Teatro di Baldracca, a large room above the customs house in a sketchy neighborhood. True to their roots, but unlike classical or classically

Early Actresses

Italians' sense of decorum kept women off the stage until the mid-1500s. By 1548 the Florentine Signoria company included actresses; the first actress whose name has survived is Lucrezia of Rome (1564). From 1566 to 1568 the new companies of "Flaminia" and Vincenza Armani mesmerized Mantuan society with their rivalry. Performing in noblemen's halls they presented tragedies and novel pastorals as well as comedies. Vincenza, who apparently led her company, was eulogized for her acting skill and ability to elicit a range of emotions: joy, fear, passion, hatred, sorrow. By the 1570s every professional Italian troupe included actresses.

inspired plays, these performances were multimedia pageants of physical comedy, singing, dancing, instrumental music, mime, acrobatics, professional eloquence, sometimes elaborate sets, and lots of props and costumes.

The earliest performers had probably started out as street performers essentially apprenticed to charlatans, mountebanks, comic duos, or buffoons. Though clearly literate, *arte* actors performed improvisationally. Each troupe borrowed or developed a large set of situations into which they set their stock characters. Even when printed, these situations lacked predetermined dialogue, since as the play unfolded each actor drew from a vast store of skeletons of conversation, set soliloquies, and physical stage business. Over time, actors printed stage books and collections of verbal bits for other actors, fans, or their own colleagues. These demonstrate that some had read quite widely in literature ranging from Boccaccio's *Decameron* to manuals for behavior at court, classical comedies from the likes of Apuleius to Italian folk tales, and Plato to Petrarch.

As with early farce, plots were structured around conflict, often involving a rivalry for the young woman's affection. Subplots involving disguises, mistaken identities, magic, comic rural-urban friction, or other surprise elements added texture to the drama. Though *arte* comedies ignored classical dramatic principles, they did have some of their own, including presenting about 12 characters with no more than two major characters onstage at one time. As audiences were used to being preached to, advertised to, lectured to, and harangued, they demanded of performers a high level of eloquence and comic realism. Italians were quite aware and sensitive about their wealth of dialects and the statuses they inferred: *arte* performers used a variety of them to flesh out their educated urban or boorish mountain characters. By using and ridiculing popular stock characters representing

young lovers, the clever and successful servant, the old and lustful, the rich and greedy, the powerful and corrupt, the pompous professional, and the arrogant but easily duped bully *commedia dell'arte* could appeal across classes and draw paying audiences from the *popolo* and patronage from patricians.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; Music at Church; Music at Court; Theater for the Elite; Women and the Arts; *Economics and Work*: Apprentices; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender*: Servants, Household; *Fashion and Appearance*: Social Status and Clothing; *Housing and Community*: City Streets and *Piazze*; Palazzi; Patronage; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Civic Festivals; Music and Dance in Popular Culture; Reading; Street Entertainment; Theater, Religious

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THEATER, RELIGIOUS

Christianity lends itself to storytelling, whether in Bible readings, preachers' sermons, books, the liturgy, or performed by actors for an audience. Medieval churches sometimes took the biblical stories of the Nativity or of Christ's Passion out of the pulpit and had congregants act them out in the sanctuary—as St. Francis famously did with his Nativity scene at Greccio—or on the church's front steps. As with painters who clothed biblical figures in contemporary costume, the impetus of liturgical drama was to make the truths and teachings of the stories come alive and become relevant for the viewers.

By the fifteenth century, performances had evolved into rather sophisticated expressions, with specially written vernacular texts sung in recitative style by

competent actors. Increasingly organized by confraternities, costumes, props, backdrops, “flying” machinery, and other elements of staging also grew in quality. This was especially true where the groups competed with one another. A rather simple form took place in Florence during the festivities for St. John’s Day (June 26). For over 70 years, parades of ten large pageant wagons offered ten short biblical scenes. In 1454 the series opened with Creation, and in 1514 with the Fall of Lucifer. Bishops oversaw these tableaux, and Antoninus in 1454 banned depictions of the Passion itself as being too serious. Around 1500, however, playwright Castellano Castellani revived these episodes. Friar-directed confraternities played out longer and more developed scenarios on market days and festivals in *piazze* in competition with secular farces and a host of street entertainers. Bologna’s Compagnia di San Girolamo ministered to boys and included boys, in the hope of keeping them from drinking, gambling, and other vices. A book by Bologna’s Friar Tommaso Leoni contains texts for 23 performances during Holy Week (the seven days before Easter) that would have involved hundreds of participants.

Youth confraternities were also prominent in Florence, and staging presentations was a creative way to keep the young minds and bodies occupied. The earliest known playwright, Feo Belcari, also wrote as a way to introduce young men to classical theater. The earliest known youth production was in 1430 by the Raphael Confraternity, and had the pope in the audience. Lorenzo de’ Medici not only supported their efforts but wrote dialogue for their performances. Another prominent playwright Giovan Maria Cecchi penned at least 28 plays for four different youth confraternities in the mid-1400s. The youthful Florentine Company of the Purification was sponsored by the Dominican convent of San Marco, holding its plays in the courtyard in front of the convent. Its fifteenth-century inventory lists many items associated with its productions, including sets for a castle, prison, and temple, and costumes including iridescent taffeta gowns and wings of tinsel and peacock feathers for angels. Other youth groups performed inside Florentine mendicant churches, such as the Augustinian Santo Spirito and Carmelite Carmine.

Rome’s tradition of religious drama is traceable to thirteenth-century “Laments of Mary at the Foot of the Cross,” captured by the musical text *Stabat Mater*. The religious theater season remained Holy Week, and most Roman plays revolved around the Passion and Easter. Confraternities produced these, which evolved from Gospel paraphrases and drawn-out skits to fully staged shows. Rome’s oldest confraternity, the Gonfalone (banner), performed what were considered the grandest of the Passion plays, which recounted the stories of Lazarus’ resurrection, the Passion, and Christ’s resurrection. In 1486 three other confraternities joined the group, which from 1490 performed plays by the Florentine Giuliano Dati in the Colosseum. Dati’s texts—in vernacular, sung verse—were pirated and printed.

They also provoked emotional anti-Semitic reactions among audiences that led Pope Paul III to stop them in 1539. Velletri, near Rome, was the site of one of Italy's earliest purpose-built theaters. Constructed between 1509 and 1513 it was an attempt to follow Roman forms of the classical architect Vitruvius as interpreted by humanist-architect Leon Battista Alberti. Featuring a wooden platform and screen for backdrops, it was built specifically for the annual Passion play of the Confraternity of San Giovanni in Plagis.

Nunneries also prepared and performed sacred plays. These often occurred during Carnival in Venice, drawing audiences of friends, family, patrons, and important members of the general public to their houses' parlors. All of the women residents took part in what were supposed to be edifying representations of saints' lives, biblical stories, or historical events. Official rules forbade masks, beards, or secular costumes, especially male clothing, as well as profane songs or texts. The more liberal houses broke some or all rules, and even conservative communities might stitch the women's habits as tightly as "soldiers'" garb. In 1593 Venice's nuns were ordered to wear only standard habits during performances.

By the mid-sixteenth century Church authorities were exercising ever greater controls over lay productions of religious material. Pope Paul III ended most Roman productions in the 1530s, Ravenna and Urbino banned them altogether after the Council of Trent, and the bishops of Florence and Genoa tightened their controls. The recently founded Society of Jesus (Jesuits; 1540), however, found religious theater very useful in teaching and disciplining their students and in engaging the confraternities they sponsored. Their direction breathed new life into *sacre rappresentazioni*.

See also: *Family and Gender:* Childhood; *Housing and Community:* City Streets and *Piazze*; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Carnival; Church Festivals and Processions; Theater, Popular; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Churches; Confraternities; Friars; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Nuns and Nunneries; Saints and Their Cults

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Toys and Games. *See Children's Toys and Games*

WEDDINGS

Before the Council of Trent, all that a Christian couple needed to wed was eligibility as defined by the local civic authorities and a clear, uncoerced statement of intent pronounced before a witness, usually a notary. Copulation sealed the deal. To delegitimize clandestine, or secret nuptials, Trent added a couple of public elements such as repeated public announcements of the couple's intent, or banns, and the participation of the bride's parish priest. But marriage was far from simply a personal affair. It joined families socially, redistributed their wealth, and allowed for the addition of a next generation to the groom's family. But it was more than just a family affair. Whether in a village or among the elites of Rome or Naples, families were the building blocks of society, and traditionally society participated in the celebration of new and fruitful arrangements. Families put their honor and status on display, quite literally. Public participation was also a pledge of support for the couple.

Members of the artisanal and laboring, urban and rural classes may have celebrated rather frugally, but with honor at stake they provided what they could to their guests. Rented or borrowed tables lined the street; simple but festive foods and wines covered them; and hired musicians, or just local players and singers filled the air with inviting tunes. Family, neighbors, and friends gathered to eat, sing, dance, and wish the couple all the best. The bride's gown, headdress, and jewelry would never be finer, and her family wore their best garments. The bride's trousseau was probably put on display: glassware, ceramics, and polished pewter gleaming in torchlight. At evening's end, the bride and groom were escorted by tipsy and raucous revelers who helped carry her trousseau and any gifts to the couple's home. Blocking their way might be a group of semi-threatening thugs, perhaps from an adjacent neighborhood, enacting the *mattinata* (ritual), who could be bought off with a cheap silver ring that would buy them a round of drinks.

Further up the social ladder elites celebrated far more lavishly, though the rudiments were similar: food, drink, music, dancing, display, and fancy clothing. Because as much as a year could pass between initial agreements and consummation,

several banquets were not unusual. These occurred indoors in the hall and other large rooms of the palazzo, and spilled out into the courtyard, barricaded street, and nearby loggia. Family wealth was on display to impress visitors, and festive banners and even rented tapestries covered walls. Souvenirs might include glassware or forks decorated with the two families' arms. The couple sat prominently on a dais, perhaps covered with an expensive Turkish carpet. The bride dazzled all with her finery, which no one present was expected to match. Even so, new garments to attend such a feast could be terribly expensive. In 1447 the wedding feast of Marco Parenti, a Medici associate in Florence, featured 93 pounds of veal and 104 chickens. He rented 200 trays and bowls and hired musicians who performed on the harp, flutes, trumpets, and fifes. In 1466, Florence's Rucellai family celebrated a Medici marriage with no fewer than six banquets over three days. The kitchen had to be moved into the street. Cities regularly passed sumptuary laws to limit expenditures by hosts and guests alike, though they were often ignored. In 1398 Bologna limited banquets to a Spartan 30 guests and in 1401 to 24. Venetian brides were not allowed to wear cloth of gold; the number of courses and dishes served was limited; and there was a cap on the value of wedding gifts. Nonetheless, Venice's Foscari family wedding of 1513 included 500 guests who enjoyed food, music, dancing, and a theatrical production.

The Mattinata

In northern Italy, when a widow or widower remarried, friends, relatives, and even youthful strangers "assaulted" the couple's procession to the bridegroom's home, even blocking its progress, unless the groom ritually paid the group off. Part merriment and part serious ritual, people made raucous noise banging pots and pans, ringing bells, shouting and singing and even making obscene taunts. So rooted in custom was the *mattinata* that at the court of Ferrara in 1502 when Duke Alfonso d'Este canceled that planned for his wedding with papal daughter Lucrezia Borgia—his second and her third—his own noble family complained.

When Lorenzo de' Medici married Clarise Orsini, of Roman nobility, Florentine cooks served 800 guests at a single meal. At the top of the hierarchy weddings took on special significance. They were usually politically motivated, arranged by diplomats, and gave the groom's capital city an opportunity to shine brilliantly

before assembled dignitaries from across Europe. Dynastic weddings were grand affairs of state, often lasting weeks and engaging the entire town or city. Perhaps the best documented was that of Tuscany's Grand Duke Ferdinando to Christine of Lorraine in 1589. Preparations were almost military in scale. About 2,700 guests had to be accommodated; some of them stayed in Medici villas, of which there were 17. Of course, each guest had to dazzle all others, and each brought entourages of dozens: Vincenzo Gonzaga of Mantua had 700. The bride processed slowly after landing at Livorno and was greeted at the city gate by 2,000 clergy and escorting troops and 160 local notables with their entourages of four to ten liveried attendants each. Wine fountains and showers of small coins kept the people happy, as did the endless display of finery. The Duomo was filled with 38,000 candles for her short visit, and the courtyard of the Pitti Palace was transformed into a huge pool in which 150 costumed sailors fought on 18 boats. From her arrival at Livorno to the final theatrical production—45 days.

See also: *Arts*: Portraits; *Family and Gender*: Dowries; Espousal and Wedding; *Fashion and Appearance*: Attire, Female; Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Furnishing the House; Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare*: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Civic Festivals; Music and Dance in Popular Culture; Street Entertainment; *Religion and Beliefs*: Sacraments, Catholic; *Primary Document*: The Wedding of Lorenzo il Magnifico: Letter of Piero di Cosimo de' Medici to Filippo Strozzi the Elder (1469)

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WOMEN, LETTERS, AND LETTER WRITING

When late fourteenth-century merchant Francesco Datini was away from his home in Prato, he communicated with his wife, Margherita, and she with him, by letter. Some were little more than scraps of paper with reminders, news, or a shopping list, others longer, more intimate expressions of concern or frustration. Initially she used one of several family friends as a scribe, but Francesco was annoyed by having others know of their family matters. So, she learned to read and write. Scores of their letters survive, as do some 40 between Margherita and other women. Each begins “In the name of God”; is dated; if appropriate refers to a previous letter received; lays out its contents; and ends “May God guard you” and is signed, or signed “for” Margherita. Between 1446 and 1471, Florentine widow Alessandra Macigni Strozzi carried on a correspondence with her three adult boys, who had been exiled as anti-Medici partisans. Seventy-three of her letters survive. In dealing with her sons Alessandra used a mixed rhetoric employing biblical, proverbial, and sympathetic expressions as she warned, reprimanded, advised, and informed them by turns.

Among noble women, Isabella d’Este must hold the record, as some 12,000 letters remain from the duchess in the copybooks of Mantua. Many of these were requests to agents to purchase items for her notable collection of art, antiquities, and oddities. Fourteenth-century Dominican leader and mystic St. Catherine of Siena left 353 letters, the first large public collection in Italian. In 1500 the Venetian press of Aldus Manutius published the collection, beginning a flow of compendiums of printed female correspondence. An early example was Roman noblewoman, intellectual, and religious advisor Vittoria Colonna’s three *Letters* (1544) to the Duchess of Amalfi, a small collection of spiritual advice from one woman to another on the virtues of the active and contemplative lives. Angelica Paola Antonia de’Negri of Milan was a first-generation member of the Angelic Sisters of St. Paul and a noted spiritual advisor. Her *Spiritual Letters* were published posthumously in 1564.

By mid-century Italian readers had developed a demand for women’s letter collections. Unlike the utilitarian messages of Strozzi or Datini, surviving sixteenth-century letters were inspired by humanist standards and forms, even when written in Italian. In 1533 Giovanni Tagliente published models of *Amorous Letters* in a kind of early epistolary novel. Popular writer Ortensio Lando even printed a collection of 200 phony *Letters of Many Valorous Women* (1548) that included recipes, household advice, encouragement to educate women, and other material he had collected for women readers. It saw numerous editions. In 1580, Venetian courtesan Veronica Franco published 52 unaddressed *Familiar Letters* meant as models for expressions of gratitude, love, blame, and other common topics of correspondence. Some were clarion calls for individual liberty and in defense of her occupation. Married with children, she was a shameless self-promoter, and is the

only courtesan known to have published correspondence (others published poetry). A collection of *Love Letters* appeared in 1562 under the name of Celia Romana, supposedly a Roman courtesan. Published by a male editor, it may well have been spurious. In Franco's letter #22 she addresses a girl considering becoming a prostitute: Franco admits the benefits but advises against it. Another book of models was Paolo Manuzio's *Vernacular Letters of Various Most Noble Men* (1542), which included two women authors and argued for the value of expressing oneself in one's own language. He also reminded readers of the well-known Ciceronian dictum that good writing should be both entertaining and instructive.

Poet Lucrezia Gonzaga, a humanist and wife of condottiere Giampolo Manfrone, was the center of an intellectual circle that met at the family palazzo at Fratto near Venice. Her husband was imprisoned from 1546 to his death in 1552 for an assassination attempt. In 1552 Lucrezia—or perhaps Ortensio Lando?—printed *Letters of Lady Lucrezia Gonzaga*. These reflect her experiences during Giampolo's imprisonment and then his loss. Autobiography and admonitions to women to remain free from ties to men, self-sufficient, and intellectually autonomous blend with hints of religious heresy. Other notable collections include Paduan apothecary and feminist Camilla Erculiani's *Letters on Natural Philosophy* (1584); Chiara Matraini, *Letters and Poetry*, (1595); and the recently published 82 Latin letters of poet and humanist Laura Cereta from 1488 to 1499.

See also: *Arts*: Women and the Arts; Women Poets and Their Poetry; *Family and Gender*: Siblings; Widows; Wives and Husbands; *Food and Drink*: Galenic Health Regimens; *Housing and Community*: Patronage; Poor, Aid to; *Recreation and Social Customs*: News; Reading; *Religion and Beliefs*: Nuns and Nunneries; Woman Mystics

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RELIGION AND BELIEFS



INTRODUCTION

Renaissance-era Italy was a Roman Catholic region. There were pockets of Greek Orthodox believers in Venice and the south, hidden Protestant groups and distinctive Jewish communities in major cities such as Venice, and Muslim merchants in the south who came and went. There were also what might be called free thinkers, such as the Friulian miller Menocchio revealed by Carlo Ginzburg in *The Cheese and the Worms*. Yet the Catholic Church dominated the Italian Peninsula and islands culturally, socially, and in some ways politically. Churches, chapels, shrines, and clergy were everywhere; Catholic religious feasts dotted the calendar; and Catholic teachings were deeply embedded in civil laws. Jews were restricted to ghettos, and the Inquisition hounded Protestants and false converts. While Church and state were separate entities, it is safe to say that the state was Catholic, if not always in obedience to the papacy.

But then, the Church was not the papacy, and Catholicism was not the Church. Religion has its outward manifestations—festivals, rituals, doctrines, art, music, places of worship—that are experienced by believers and non-believers. These tend to leave the greatest marks on the historical record, and can be mistaken for what religion really provided to the people of the time. Today, a Madonna and Child painted by Raphael hangs in a museum to be noted quickly and passed by. A box of Christmas cards featuring the work is available in the gift shop. A streaming lecture discusses it in terms of Raphael's evolution as an artist. All of this would have been utterly alien to a person who knelt and prayed fervently before the image 500 years ago. She might have noted the donor's heraldic shield on the frame and prayed for his soul in purgatory. As a young mother she would have related directly to the sweet, loving parental smile, and the fidgeting of the young boy. If named Maria, she had a special relationship with the Virgin, and felt she could ask



Painted and sculpted images of Mary with the baby Jesus played a large part in the Cult of Mary. In this Florentine painting of the Madonna and Child (ca. 1485), Sandro Botticelli (1445–1510) depicts Jesus playing with a pomegranate, a classical symbol of both passion and resurrection. (Yale University Art Gallery)

the Blessed Mother for any aid she needed. If the image was one that her community considered miraculous, then her expectations for a positive response were heightened. After all, the city and Church authorities carried the image through the city's streets annually and when disaster threatened. She may not have been clear whether Mary herself performed miracles, or whether she convinced her divine Son to provide them, but the process of asking and the result were the same. She lit a small candle as an outward sign of her spiritual request, and perhaps prayed aloud a prayer she had learned as a child. If the problem in Maria's life was resolved, she attributed the resolution to Mary's intervention, spread the word about the painting's being a doorway to the divine, and returned with a token of her appreciation to place in the chapel containing the painting that now hangs in a museum.

Historians have become quite sensitive to the personal depth of meaning contained in religious artifacts, writings, and accounts of rituals. And yet "religion" did have a less than spiritual and personal side. It meant a physical presence in the form of huge and expensive cathedrals and bishops' palazzi. It meant imposed fasting and abstinence from meat during Lent. It meant reliance on often-corrupt and outwardly sinful clergy. If the Church was *the* religious organization, its offices were staffed by humans who evoked both love and hate, respect and resentment. If the Church was divinely inspired, it was led by men who were often politically inspired, sometimes scandalously so. Yet one aspect of the genius of Catholicism is that its own structure provides responses. If one's parish was poorly led and its pastor could not preach for rotting teeth or sheer ignorance, the Franciscans and



This woodcut of Venice's Ascension Day celebration of its "marriage" to the sea presents both the lagoon and the civic center of the city, as well as the doge's ceremonial ship the Bucentaur. From a large broadsheet (1565) by German Jost Amann (1539–1591) after an original by Titian. (World Digital Library)

other mendicant orders across town provided regular Masses and fine preachers. During the sixteenth century the Church conducted two reform councils. The failure of the first (Fifth Lateran Council, 1512–1517) helped fuel the rise of Protestantism, which in turn helped spawn the second and far more successful Council of Trent. Though this was top-down institutional fine-tuning that confirmed Catholic traditions and rejected Protestant innovations, it also imposed barriers to corruption and sought to revitalize the spiritual lives of the people.

Religion was not the only source of beliefs during the Renaissance era. Folk traditions stretching back well before Christianity continued to have their place. These often came into play when a person sought an explanation for an extraordinary occurrence. A peasant's cow died of a mysterious cause. Was it an illness or an accident? Poisoning by a malicious neighbor? Punishment from God, or the work of Satan? A curse by a witch perhaps, or the evil eye? Religion shaped some responses, such as prayer and repentance. Older beliefs shaped others, such as wearing an amulet or talisman, burning sage, or hiring a "wise-woman" to cast a counter curse. The prudent answer, of course, was to listen to both the priest and the old widow woman who healed, protected, and found things.

A fundamental question when studying history is, how do we know? Sources for uncovering religious and other beliefs seem simple at first glance. Scriptures had long been standardized; commentaries by scholars and saints abounded; and Church mandates and preachers' sermons were printed. Many rituals were ancient and carefully prescribed; houses of worship survive or were well described; sacred music was recorded on paper; and sacred art and texts have been preserved. Parish and confraternity records specify articles of clothing for ritual use that were purchased or stored; laws restricting interactions between Christians and Jews

highlight social barriers reinforcing religious differences; and *ricordanze*, letters, poetry, prayers, and other personal writings describe religious beliefs and experiences that either reflect or contradict the mainstream. Perhaps most enlightening of all are records of the Inquisition, in which the authentic voices of often illiterate and therefore silent people come alive as they describe their understanding of how the world works. Menocchio was one of these.

BIBLE

The Holy Bible is the sacred text that informs all branches of the Christian religion. Its Old Testament consists of a collection of pre-Common Era Hebrew texts that differs in content among the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant traditions. Its New Testament is an agreed-upon set of four lives of Jesus Christ (Gospels), a narrative of the early Christian community (Acts), letters to early Christians (epistles), and a prophecy of the world's end (Apocalypse).

Renaissance-era scholarship reshaped the original Hebrew and Greek texts themselves as well as translations into Latin and Italian. The invention of printing made these readily available to more readers than ever before. Bibles were decorated with illustrative woodcuts, engravings, and paintings of the highest quality. Renaissance-era artists painted and sculpted individuals and scenes from Scripture's pages, creating the period's greatest and most popular artworks that appeared in palaces and churches. Selections from the Gospels and epistles were to be read aloud at every Mass; every Benedictine monastery sang the entire Book of Psalms once each week. Italian preachers mined biblical texts to support and enliven their sermons, poets reinterpreted biblical stories, and satirists parodied them. Both civil laws and natural laws had to conform to biblical statements, which were to be taken as true above even human sensory experience. The Protestant Reformation supposedly redirected Christianity according to the correct interpretation of biblical teaching, providing a powerful impetus to biblical scholarship among Reform and Counter-Reformation Catholic authorities alike. In short, despite trends toward secularization, the Holy Bible remained at the center of much of what constituted Renaissance-era life and culture.

Growing up Italian meant, for most, growing up Catholic. Even poor households displayed a print or carved wooden image of a Madonna and Child or Crucifixion. Parents or older siblings explained to children the biblical stories behind the feast-days celebrating the Annunciation, Nativity, Purification, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost. Jewish children learned of Passover, the Hanukkah lights, and Purim. Children's names recalled biblical heroes, from Abraham to

Paul, and provided opportunities to learn their stories. From the front door to the back wall of the sanctuary, churches taught the illiterate with what became familiar biblical images from both Testaments in mosaic, stained glass, fresco, ceramics, and sculpture, and on altarpieces, book covers, and painted panels.

For those who could read, and could afford them, Bibles were always available in Latin versions of the Vulgate of fourth-century St. Jerome. Early vernacular translations date to the thirteenth century, and these seem to have been collected into complete Italian Bibles during the fourteenth. One version was first printed in Venice in 1471; by 1500, 11 vernacular print editions had appeared. More common were relatively cheap separate vernacular publications of the Gospels, Psalms, Hebrew Wisdom literature, and Apocalypse. In 1504 Paduan priest Isaia da Este complained that printing translations made Scripture available to the unlearned and even women! Though some lay Christians possessed these texts, most are believed to have been used in convents and by preachers, especially mendicants, who spoke in Italian and needed smooth and easily remembered versions of biblical passages. Even as early as the thirteenth century Italian Jewish leaders sought vernacular versions of their liturgical and Scriptural texts, and by around 1500 the Hebrew Bible appeared in full in print in Italian, but using the Hebrew alphabet.

The centrality to sixteenth-century Protestantism of Scripture in the people's languages made translations and those who possessed them suspect. The Council of Trent affirmed the Vulgate—though updated somewhat according to trusted Catholic scholarship—as the only acceptable version. The *Index of Forbidden Books* of 1559 listed nearly 60 other printed biblical editions in Latin and Italian. Most of these lacked proper publication information or Church license. In 1558 Venetian inquisitor Felice Peretti—future Pope Sixtus V—banned all vernacular editions, though in the end the Council sidestepped the matter. In 1559 the *Index*

Seven Catholic Acts of Mercy

The Church defined two sets of activities that Christians are called upon to perform for others. The corporal (bodily) acts listed in Matthew's Gospel are feed the hungry, provide drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, provide shelter for the homeless, visit the sick, ransom captives, and bury the dead. The spiritual acts of mercy derived from the Gospels are instruct the ignorant, counsel those in doubt, warn sinners, suffer injustice with patience, forgive others readily, comfort the afflicted, and pray for both the living and the dead presumed to be in purgatory.

declared that only trained clergy could access translations; in 1567 printing of translations was all but banned; and in the 1590s possessing copies was forbidden, and existing copies were destroyed. Demand remained, however, and was driven underground to black markets in Florence and port cities such as Ancona, where one might find Protestant or Catholic versions.

The late Renaissance-era Church took a defensive and puritanical turn. The nude figures in Michelangelo's Apocalyptic *Last Judgment* were provided with pants, and in 1573 the Venetian painter Paolo Veronese was called before the Inquisition and forced to change the name of his rather free and crowded rendering of the iconic *Last Supper* to the equally biblical *The Feast in the House of Levi*. Church composers had to make sung biblical texts understandable, and in 1596 poetic retellings of biblical stories in vernacular poems and plays were banned.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Sacred; *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender*: Names, Personal and Family; *Politics and Warfare*: Art, Civic; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Calendars: Sacred and Profane; Church Festivals and Processions; *Religion and Beliefs*: Christian Art in the Home; Confraternities; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Crucifix; Jews and Judaism; Preachers and Preaching; Prophecy and Apocalypticism; Protestantism

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CHAPELS

Chapels were small Catholic worship spaces built into or near churches, in Church-related institutions, over city gates, at saints' shrines, in castles and fortresses, private residences, and just about anywhere else a person or organization with the means wanted one. Patrons such as wealthy families, guilds, confraternities, religious orders, high church leaders, rulers, and small villages built chapels for various reasons and purposes, from penance for sin to family burials. A chapel included an altar for Mass, and a properly equipped chapel included the candlesticks, crucifix, chalice and plate, linens and books necessary for the Mass. The simple presence of an altar, however, could earn a space the designation "chapel." A specific priest (chaplain) might have been attached to a given chapel, drawing an income from the chapel's patrons, or local clergy might have had the right to serve the chapel. These spaces were often highly decorated, and those that were visually accessible to the public enhanced their settings. Some of the Renaissance's artistic masterworks graced chapels. Among famous chapels were the pope's Sistine Chapel; the Medici, Brancacci, and Pazzi Chapels in Florence; San Marco in Venice, which was originally the doge's chapel; the Palatine Chapel in Palermo, and the Arena Chapel in Padua decorated by Giotto.

Physically, a chapel could be a free-standing building, a fully enclosed room, a space along a church wall that had three walls and was open to the nave or transept, a similar space without the side walls, or a space added to the larger church. If the patron had the funds, the walls and ceiling would have been painted: the walls with biblical or other sacred scenes and the ceiling with a pattern such as gold stars against a sky-blue background. Simpler treatment would be in the form of a large panel painting (altarpiece) of a major religious figure, perhaps the patrons' name saint or the Madonna and Child. Heraldic symbols or those of urban groups helped visitors to churches identify the patrons of chapels. These were usually closed with grilles or gates that allowed viewing from the nave but not public entry. In the 1560s, Grand Duke Cosimo de' Medici cleared out all of the family-patronized walled side chapels in the huge Dominican and Franciscan churches of Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce. Projecting walls and grilles disappeared, and the frescoes on the church walls were painted over. Each altar's chapel remained, however, marked with a very small coat of arms. In Santa Croce new altarpieces were

chosen for their content, sequentially illustrating scenes from the Passion and its aftermath. The well-established grand duke thus symbolically minimized Florence's traditional great families, though some had chapels in several churches. Group patrons such as confraternities or guilds needed larger spaces for communal worship, funerals, and other rituals such as inductions, so their chapels were often part of a larger building other than a church, such as a convent or guild hall. These, too, would be decorated with religious imagery, though they were usually closed to the public.

Family chapels served several functions. One was simply display: the family had requisite money and status to contract for one of the city's rare sacred spaces, and resources to furnish, decorate, and maintain it. These often served as burial places for senior family members. Burial near an altar was considered spiritually powerful, and the patrons hoped that passersby would pray on behalf of the souls of those buried there, lessening their time in purgatory. Of course, Masses were said at the altars and with the patrons' furnishings. Even if no one attended a service, it was considered a powerful, divinely ordered ritual whose performance helped those remembered in the service, whether dead or alive. This was the principal reason for having a chapel. Some were built in memory of a dead father and then maintained across generations as family members who made last wills left money for upkeep or decoration. Masses for salvation of a recently deceased family member's soul were traditionally celebrated for 30 days, and then on each anniversary of his or her death. Palazzi and villas of the powerful, such as the Palazzo Medici in Florence, were equipped with a chapel so that family members could attend services without appearing in public. A family chapel might also be the result of a vow made to God or a saint by a patron at a time of danger or stress, and thus itself be an *ex voto* memorial. The same might be true of an altarpiece, which explains why so many feature the plague saint Sebastian.

Tabernacles

God's presence on city streets and country roads has long been marked by small shrines attached to posts or building corners. Inside a wooden or stone box-like frame topped by a deep pitched roof for protection from weather is a painted or sculpted image of a Madonna, saint, or the Crucifixion. Medieval and Renaissance communities or individuals made or purchased these, and devotees have regularly honored Jesus or the saint with flowers or lit candles and prayers. Some were *ex votos*, but the stories behind most survivors are lost to history.

The line between Church and state was often very thin, so chapels appear in city halls and other public structures. With few exceptions citizens had to be Catholic, so there was no conflict. City councilors usually had a chapel, as did soldiers and guild members; and travelers coming or going could visit a chapel over or near a city's main gates. Hospitals, orphanages, foundling homes, and similar institutions had chapels for daily services for the staff and residents. A chapel's presence in such a place gave the local bishop vague administrative rights over the place, so at least one last will establishing a secular orphanage forbade the inclusion of a chapel on the premises.

Only rulers and high churchmen had chapels before mendicants popularized the practice and built churches suitable for them. Down to about 1600 chapels proliferated. In Florence, the cathedral had 22 in 1431 and 56 in 1514; in the early 1400s the architect Filippo Brunelleschi designed 8 for the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, but 25 in San Lorenzo, and during the fifteenth century 27 new chapels were added to Santissima Annunziata.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; Daily Life in Art; Painters and Their Workshops; *Families:* Death, Funerals, and Burial; Families, Noble and Patrician; *Housing and Community:* Neighborhood and Parish; Patronage; *Religion and Beliefs:* Church Festivals and Processions; Churches; Confraternities; Friars; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Mary, Cult of; Memorials *Ex Voto*; Monks and Monasteries; Nuns and Nunneries; Pilgrims and Shrines; Sacraments, Catholic; Saints and Their Cults

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CHRISTIAN ART IN THE HOME

For most Italians their Catholic religion permeated their lives from baptism to burial, whether on the road, celebrating in the streets, or with family at home. Because of the perceived power of the sacred, residences from rural or urban hovels to noble palazzi displayed religious images. Artists from rustic woodcarvers to commercial printers to Michelangelo provided the images, which tended to follow

traditional patterns, even if the styles moved along with Renaissance trends of classicism and greater naturalism. As evidence, a few domestic religious frescoes remain in place; wills and probate inventories list the full contents of household rooms, including religious art; museums and special collections contain thousands of these items; and both sacred and secular paintings reveal how and where religious sculptures, tabernacles, and painted panels were used in Renaissance-era residences.

As visitors exit the Palazzo Datini in Prato today, they note that the front door is flanked by an image of St. Christopher. The saintly protector of travelers has stood there since the structure was decorated in the early 1390s. The same artist depicted a bust of the blessing Christ directly over the same door. The pair was an unobtrusive signal to visitors that this was a Christian home. Like a “welcome” mat to those arriving, and to family, friends, and strangers leaving, the images of Christ and Christopher were reassuring reminders of divine accompaniment as they entered the busy street. They may have even elicited a short prayer or sign of the cross to reinforce the effect. We know from inventories that the large home contained many traditional types of Christian imagery: especially panels of the Madonna and the dead Christ. Francesco Datini also bought and sold these very kinds of paintings, importing them from Avignon where he had begun his mercantile career. A generation later the shop accounts of Florentine painter Neri di Bicci recorded the many similar small-scale items his shop prepared for domestic use. Of 152 commissioned works between 1453 and 1475, Neri listed 63 as domestic religious works. His customers included many artisans, including a stoneworker, barrel-maker, and barber; a cheap tabernacle of Mary ran between three and four *lire*. In 1550 the printer Giolito Trino’s home inventory listed four Madonnas, a dead Christ, the three magi, and a St. Jerome; his secular works were the Three Graces and portraits of himself and his son. A study of fifteenth-century Medici, Da Uzzano, and Tornabuoni townhouses and villas counted 260 artworks, of which 190, or 73%, were religious.

Trino’s craft produced an entirely new kind of religious imagery: the printed—and often colored in—single sheet. Woodcuts, engravings, and etchings of Christ, Mary, and various saints and biblical scenes often shared the page with an appropriate prayer or hymn, and graced the walls of huts and grand palazzi alike. These inexpensive prints were sold from bookshops, shrines, market stalls, on feast days, and by itinerant preachers. Some were framed and hung, others merely tacked to walls, pasted into cupboard doors, box lids, or books. By the sixteenth century there was a fully developed market for prints of classic religious works of the era’s masters. Major cities even had secondhand markets for these images, ensuring that even the poor could afford them. Christian art appeared, of course, in illustrated books: saints’ lives, Books of Hours, and illustrated Bibles.

Religious motifs were also available in three dimensions, as statuettes of Mary, free-standing crucifixes, painted wax, terra-cotta, or glazed ceramic figurines, plaquettes, or medals with Christian subjects. A tabernacle could enclose a statuette as easily as a painted panel, the “little house” being hung near the bed and fitted with a candleholder and even little curtains. Inventories also mention “altars,” which may have meant the presence of a full chapel in a large palazzo, or merely a covered table placed in front of a tabernacle, on which candles, other images such as self-propping diptychs, a rosary, or a prayer book might be kept. The fifteenth-century Dominican preacher and later cardinal Giovanni Dominici famously recommended that children be encouraged to play respectfully around such an altar to encourage piety and perhaps vocations to the nunnery or priesthood. Of course, Mass could be said only at properly dedicated altars in household chapels, such as that in the Palazzo Medici, a practice banned by the Council of Trent.

Dominici was a big fan of shaping children’s character with appropriate images placed around the house. The piety of servants and even the family’s adults could be reinforced by the presence of religious art. But morality could be expressed in other forms as well. Patrician or noble homes often displayed some or all of the seven virtues (Faith, Hope, Love, Temperance, Prudence, Justice, and Fortitude), especially in their main halls; from the mid-fifteenth century ceramicists Desiderio da Settignano and Andrea della Robbia pioneered glazed images of children that appealed by their evocation of innocence and joy. Pregnant women were also expected to benefit from such depictions of happy and healthy infants. Images of holy motherhood reminded the house’s matron of her duty and reward, and helped prepare young women for their futures, and late-Renaissance paintings of the Holy Family reflected the ideals of domestic bliss. In the mid-sixteenth century G. B. Moroni blended the familial with the sacred in paintings of family members devoutly attentive as saints or Christ gaze out at the viewer.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Sacred; Art Patronage; Ceramics, Decorative; Portraits; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; Sculpture; *Family and Gender*: Birth and Midwives; Education of Children; Espousal and Wedding; Fertility, Conception, and Contraception; Pregnancy; *Housing and Community*: Furnishing the House; Palazzi; Villas; *Religion and Beliefs*: Chapels; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Crucifix; Mary, Cult of; Preachers and Preaching; Sacramentals; Saints and Their Cults

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CHURCHES

A church is a building used for Christian worship and other functions related to the Christian community. In Renaissance-era Italy the vast majority of churches were Roman Catholic, though Orthodox communities and even some Protestant groups gathered in what were proper churches. An English visitor to Rome counted 134 in the 1570s, of which 46 new structures had been built between 1527 (the Sack of Rome) and 1580. Around 1500 Venice had 76 parish churches, and around 80 belonged to regular orders of monks, nuns, or friars.

Catholic churches were of several distinct types. The cathedral was the unique urban seat (*cathedra*) of the diocese's bishop, and was generally the largest church in a diocese. Near or attached to each cathedral was the baptistery building, a church—often polygonal—in which babies and converts were baptized under the bishop's supervision. Larger towns in a diocese distant from the cathedral city had a *pieve*, or church sanctioned by the bishop for baptisms. As towns grew in population, popes created new dioceses and *pievi* became cathedrals, as in the case of Santo Stefano in Prato, near Florence. Towns and cities were divided into geographic parishes (*parrocchie*), each of which contained a parochial church staffed by one or more priests (secular clergy) who were directly under the bishop's supervision.

Regular orders of clergy and religious (the term refers to monks, nuns, friars) had long colonized Italian cities. Each had its own residence(s)—including nunneries for women, monasteries for male monks, and convents for mendicant friars—each of which had its unique church building. In the sixteenth century, Rome sprouted new churches belonging to new orders, such as the Jesuits and Theatines, and older structures might be reassigned to different branches of the same order (male to female, or stricter to less strict followers). Some churches might also be rededicated, as was Florence’s Cathedral of Santa Reparata—today Santa Maria del Fiore. Cathedral dedications usually represented the city’s chief protector saint, often Mary, while baptisteries are usually named for John the Baptist (San Giovanni). Regular orders might choose names from within the order, such as the Benedictine San Benedetto, Franciscan San Francesco, or Dominican San Domenico; or have made less obvious choices, as in Florence’s Franciscan Santa Croce (Holy Cross) and Dominican Santa Maria Novella (New St. Mary’s).

Cities were also dotted with other churches, though some were little more than large chapels. Shrines could grow up within existing churches around “miraculous” paintings or relics. A church shrine could be established where a saint’s remains had been located or on the spot of a holy apparition or miracle. Basilicas are churches in which a saint is buried, such as those of St. Peter in Rome, St. Ambrose in Milan, St. Francis in Assisi, and St. Anthony in Padua. Basilica, however, also refers to a Roman building type often used for churches. Rome, Venice, and Florence each has a church noted as a burial site for local or national heroes: the Pantheon (Sta. Maria Rotonda), the Frari, and Sta. Croce, respectively. Civic governments, lords, and wealthy citizens sometimes founded

Indulgences

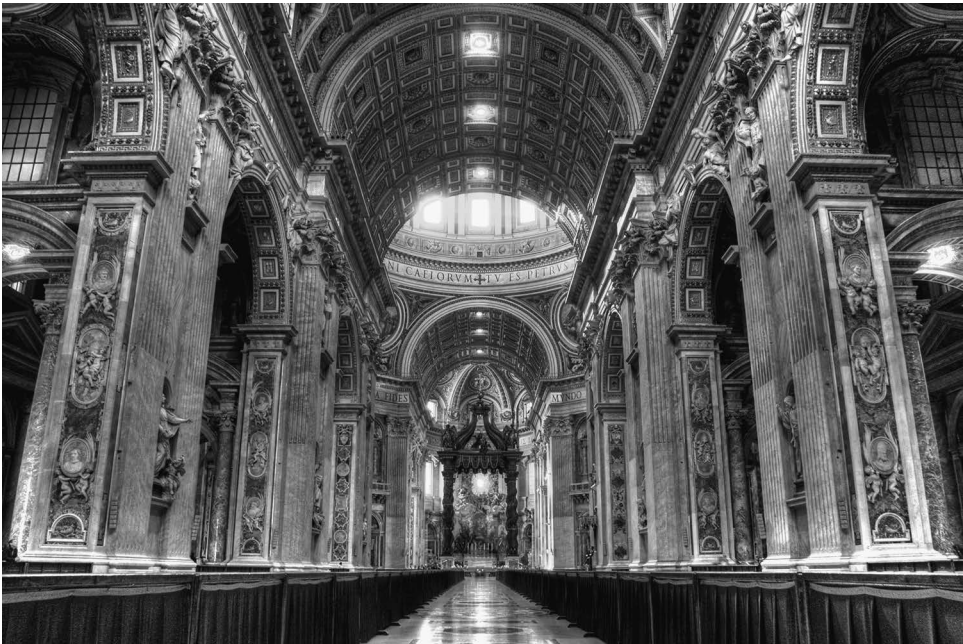
When Crusaders went off to war, the pope promised them forgiveness of their sins if they died while on Crusade. Those who could not go were given a certificate attesting to the same mercy *if* they made a full confession. By the Renaissance era these “indulgences” were being sold outright, to the ire of Martin Luther. Popes also granted certain churches, chapels, and shrines indulgences that worshippers might gain by visiting and praying on certain days. These generally promised to reduce time spent in purgatory by weeks or years, and were an important way to draw visitors who spent money in donations or on souvenirs.

churches and placed religious communities in charge of overseeing them. Larger rural villages featured churches of little architectural distinction to which worshippers would walk for Mass, especially on feast days. Many older monasteries and their churches were located far from cities, though mendicants (friars) wanted to be near dense populations, and nunneries were considered vulnerable if too isolated.

At the focal point of every church was the high or main altar in the sanctuary. The sacrifice offered at the altar in the Mass was the re-presentation to God of Christ's death on the Cross, which is why a painted or carved crucifix was always near. Renaissance-era churches usually had a large partition (rood screen) that separated the sanctuary from the body of the building in which worshipers stood, and the crucifix (rood) was often fixed atop it. By the later sixteenth century the screens had begun to disappear. Monastic churches and nunneries had spaces, often behind the high altar, known as the choir, in which the community would gather several times each day for prayer and Mass. Larger churches also featured chapels, or small spaces with altars that belonged to families, guilds, or confraternities, or were reserved for the Eucharist or a special relic. The sacristy was a functional but often decorated room in which the accessories for Mass were kept and the officiating clergy dressed themselves for a service. In older, Romanesque-style churches the sanctuary was raised above the church's crypt. This was an underground burial vault reached by steps that descended below the main altar. Burial here was reserved for high clergy or important members of the religious community. Throughout the Renaissance era important or wealthy patrons of the community were buried in chapels, or the walls or floor of the body of the church, where their tomb slabs may still be seen.

Patrons, usually wealthy aristocrats, merchants, or high clergy, furnished the accessories for Mass—vestments, candlesticks, incense, cups and plate for the Eucharist, linens for the altar—cupboards and trunks for the sacristy, Mass books and hymnbooks, and lamps and oil for evening services. Patrons also decorated rood screens and walls and sometimes ceilings with frescoes, which were often broken up when chapels were installed. Altars often had their front surfaces fitted with a painted panel, while a second panel, or altarpiece, stood on or hung over the top surface. Because many churches were cumulative projects, a 12th-century Romanesque structure in 1550 might have had Gothic-style windows, Byzantine mosaics, "modern" frescoed chapels, and a sacristy renovated with Classical elements.

Unless built from the ground up during the Renaissance era, as was St. Peter's in Rome and several of Venice's churches, the life of church structures was little disturbed by updating or decorating. They were continuing scenes of baptisms,



The Basilica of St. Peter's in Rome is the mother church of the Catholic Church. The original structure dated to the fourth century, and the current one was begun under Pope Julius II (1443–1513). Though much of the decoration is Baroque in style, its architecture is largely Renaissance, notably the great dome designed by Michelangelo (1475–1564). (Andre Nantel/Dreamstime.com)

children's first Latin lessons and First Communions, sanctuary sought by fugitives, contract-signing, confessions, ordinations of new priests, assassinations, assignations, will-making, theatrical and musical performances, hell-fire preaching, and funerals and burials. A parish's horse was brought into its church for a blessing before racing, as were militia's weapons before a military campaign, and new graduates at a university term's end. Churches hosted local markets, Church councils, and imperial coronations. But most importantly, they were the houses of God from which the devil was banned and in which the Savior was made present in every Mass.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; Art Patronage; Music at Church; Musical Instruments; Sculpture; *Economics and Work:* Construction, Building; *Family and Gender:* Heraldry; Last Wills and Testaments; *Fashion and Appearance:* Religious Habits and Vestments; *Housing and Community:* Neighborhood and Parish; Villages and Village Life; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; *Religion and Beliefs:* Chapels; Clergy, Catholic; Confraternities; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Crucifix; Friars; Memorials *Ex Voto*; Monks and Monasteries; Nuns and Nunneries; Pilgrims and Shrines; Preachers and Preaching; Sacraments, Catholic; Saints and Their Cults

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CLERGY, CATHOLIC

Roman Catholicism’s all-male clergy traces its origins to Jesus’s Apostles. As they established Christian communities or churches in the Roman Empire, they appointed leaders, whom Scripture calls “overseers” or bishops. As communities grew, these men recruited others to help them with rituals and community services, such as helping orphans and the poor. Men specially chosen and ordained to carry out rituals such as baptism and leading services were designated priests and installed or ordained by the bishop’s laying on of hands. New bishops tended to be recruited from among them. By the later Middle Ages a complete structure of celibate Church leadership by bishops—overseen by the Bishop of Rome or pope—and their priestly clergy was in place. These men played a multitude of roles in Italian society, both church-related and secular. Theoretically every inch of Italy was divided into larger or smaller dioceses administered by a bishop, and each diocese was a chessboard of parishes. Diocesan sizes differed wildly: Venetian territory included 44, while Milan’s was huge: by the later 1500s it served some 600,000 people in over 800 parishes. Each parish was to have a church and a priest to tend to his congregation’s spiritual needs. Some clerics served other purposes: living together and helping the bishop in his own urban cathedral church as canons, teaching at universities, acting as bureaucrats for the pope in Rome, traveling and preaching, or serving as personal chaplains to rulers and even the wealthy.

Renaissance-era clergy fell into two large categories. In one, the secular clergy, young men prepared for ordination and the life of a parish priest under the loose supervision of the bishop, who then assigned and oversaw the young cleric. His responsibility was the “cure of souls,” or spiritual care of all Catholics within his parish boundaries, whether rural or urban. His training might be

extensive but was more likely poor, and many parish priests were simply illiterate. Some were faithful pastors (literally shepherds), while others lived lives of scandal. Where discipline was lax, some even lived openly with women, though barred from marrying by Church law. They were expected to say Mass and deliver a sermon regularly in their community church and to perform several other sacraments: baptizing, hearing confessions, blessing and officiating at weddings, and giving the final anointing, confession, and Communion to the dying. Younger sons of the wealthy served as canons at the bishop's cathedral church. Since the bishop, canons, and parish priests served the needs of the people "in the world," they are called secular.

The second category, regular clergy, belonged to particular Church orders such as the Dominicans, Franciscans, or Jesuits that had rules (*regulae*) for living and their own leaders. Young men joined these orders and were trained and educated by them to serve as preachers, healers, priests, missionaries, teachers, or all of these, as the orders' leaders deemed needed. Dominicans, Franciscans, and other friars were often but not necessarily priests, while Jesuits were all ordained, in part so they could take the sacraments to the people they converted on missions. Friars developed during the thirteenth century to make up for the deficiencies of the parish clergy, setting up urban churches where well-trained and eloquent preachers could entertain and inspire. By their dedication to poverty and relative sophistication, they drew many followers away from their parishes and made bishops and parish clergy resentful. In many places bishops insisted that regular clergy hold services or preach at times other than did local parish churches or the cathedral's clergy. Ignatius of Loyola founded the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits, in 1540 during the sixteenth-century period of Catholic Reformation, in part to counter Protestant challenges to Catholicism's near-monopoly.

A bright, ambitious, and usually well-born priest could catch the eye of the local bishop and become his successor. Political connections, education, experience, and even bribery could play a role in a man's rise to a bishop's seat (*cathe-dra*). Like priests, Renaissance-era bishops could be dedicated pastors or even reformers, or they could be time servers who lived away from their dioceses in Rome or at the local or royal court. Coming from rich and powerful families, too many enjoyed the luxury and wealth of their families or from the incomes of their positions. Bishops were expected to supervise their clergy, prepare and ordain new ones, and confirm newly adolescent Catholics. Though expected to visit every parish regularly, few succeeded. As politicians they negotiated with rulers and civic councils, with an eye to protecting the Church's rights and privileges. They were to teach through preaching and administer all of the hospitals and other charitable and church facilities in their diocese. From at least the eleventh century certain bishops held the title cardinal and served in the College, or council, of Cardinals in Rome.

Appointed by the popes, or Bishops of Rome, cardinals usually represented Christendom's largest cities or most important families. In 1492, 29 cardinals served the pope, and twice that number by the 1550s. Since the eleventh century most popes had been elected from this body of clerical nobility. Renaissance-era papal elections were noted for their corruption and political dealing. Popes oversaw Rome and its environs, but they were also the non-hereditary monarchs over the Papal States, a wide swath of central Italy. They were also effectively the monarchs over the Catholic Church, though their subjects were often unruly. Their strongest weapon was excommunication, which cut the offender, whether emperor or lowly priest, off from the sacraments and salvation. Like other bishops and monarchs, Renaissance-era popes were great patrons of art, architecture, and music. The rebuilding of their home basilica of St. Peter's is the era's greatest architectural program.

Sixteenth-century movements of the Counter-Reformation, Catholic reform, and the Council of Trent (1545–1563) focused much attention on getting bishops to reside in their dioceses and take very seriously their supervision and education of parish pastors and their flocks. The abuses by all levels of clergy—greed, materialism, poor morals, and scandalous behavior—had weakened the Church and helped fuel the Protestant Reformation. Facing the loss of Scandinavia, northern Germany, England, and parts of France and Switzerland, most popes and many bishops took reform very seriously, which was reflected in Catholic religious life throughout Italy. This period thus saw the emergence of new, reforming clerical orders in Italy, such as the Theatines, Capuchins, and Jesuits.

See also: *Family and Gender*: Espousal and Wedding; *Fashion and Appearance*: Religious Habits and Vestments; *Housing and Community*: Neighborhood and Parish; Plague; Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare*: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; *Religion and Beliefs*: Bible; Chapels; Churches; Confraternities; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Friars; Monks and Monasteries; Preachers and Preaching; Sacramentals; Sacraments, Catholic

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CONFRATERNITIES

A confraternity was an officially recognized Catholic religious brotherhood (*frater* = brother) of lay men, boys, or women. These had their origins in the 1250s, organized and supported by Dominican and Franciscan friars as a means of increasing piety and pious activity among the laity. Important throughout the Renaissance, groups appeared, reorganized, and disappeared over time. Between 1250 and 1600 Italy spawned an estimated 1,000 confraternities. A large city might host dozens of confraternities at a time: c. 1450 Florence had nearly 100; between 1480 and 1582 Genoa hosted 131; and even tiny Borgo San Sepolcro (population 5,000 in 1340) had 14 new ones emerge between 1300 and 1350. In 1450, 40% of its males were in penitential confraternities. Spates of new groups often occurred following disasters or other big events: floods, the Black Death, or the penitential Bianchi movement in 1399.

Traditionally, a confraternity gathered regularly either to sing hymns (*laude*) to the Virgin Mary or to perform penance on behalf of the community by beating themselves with short whips (*flagella* or *disciplina*), a practice known as flagellation or discipline. They also tended to care for members' needs, including visiting their sick and burying dead brothers. Other purposes drove later confraternities, including collecting and dispensing charity, aiding in hospitals, and comforting prisoners and those to be executed. Many cities also had boys' confraternities directing adolescents' energies and spiritual development, and often feeding adult societies with new members. Some confraternities consisted of only members of certain occupations, and sororities—sisterhoods—existed in many towns for channeling the pious efforts of women. For example, in Perugia, Our Lady of San Antonio di Porta Sole elected its own leaders, prayed together, dispensed charity, and buried their own as well as family-less corpses. Always supervised by a chaplain, confraternities were often hosted by a mendicant church, as were 41% of Florence's in the 1400s. They might have had a chapel and other rooms for meetings and storage, and the day's best artisans painted or decorated them. Most famously, the sixteenth-century Scuole grandi, as the most important Venetian confraternities were known, commissioned huge paintings by Venice's greatest artists.

Like the Scuole, most Italian confraternities in larger cities drew members from all neighborhoods, though some catered to men of higher status. Confraternities transcended parishes, neighborhoods, guilds, and usually social classes, bringing together volunteers for pious purposes under the watchful eye of the Church. Since significant numbers were in confraternities at any one time, however, governments often sought to control or use them for their own purposes. The Bentivoglio in Bologna and the Medici in Florence supported and thereby harnessed confraternal activities, in some of which Lorenzo de' Medici actually participated.

Since confraternities often amassed wealth through gifts and bequests from wills, governments in Arezzo and Milan ensured that only trustworthy patricians served as officers. The statutes of the Venetian Scuole had to be vetted by the city's Council of Ten, and the Scuole helped the government recruit galley oarsmen and naval archers. In any large community confraternity members wore robes and perhaps other insignia and actively participated in civic and religious festivals. In Rome they marched en masse in candle-lit night processions; *disciplinati* processed and self-flagellated when plague threatened; and for major festivals boys' confraternities prepared and performed religious plays—*sacre rappresentazioni*—in public, a major forerunner of Italian theater.

Members of rural *laudesi* (hymn-singing) confraternities are said to have marched to their fields each morning while singing their hymns. At the center of each confraternity's spiritual life was prayer. Hymns, whether sung in fields or fancy chapels, were prayers to God, Mary, or other saints. Members also prayed during Masses and other special services, at weekly or bi-weekly meetings, and daily when alone, if they followed their confraternal statutes. Faction-torn Bologna's Santa Maria del Baraccano, founded in 1403 for socially elite men, had its members praying in a continual rotation for the sake of civic peace. Other confraternities made a point of praying for the sick, dying, or dead, prisoners, or the poor, while performing acts of charity for them, such as hospital care, visitations, burial, or provision of food or clothing.

The sixteenth century saw the rise of confraternities dedicated to the prayer cycle known as the Rosary, which could be prayed alone or in company. A bit later, Companies of the Blessed Sacrament formed to pray with special fervor in the presence of the Communion host or wafer, believed to be the true body of Christ. From such devotions arose the Church feast day of Corpus Christi—the Body of Christ—with these confraternities leading the annual processions. From Milan (from 1527) came the practice of displaying the host on a church's altar in a special golden reliquary, or monstrance, for a period of 40 continuous hours. Though often marked by parish processions, these Quarant' ore (40-hours) devotions required someone to be present and praying at all times. Thus they were occasions for both group and personal prayer.

Bianchi Movement of 1399–1400

Another round of pestilence looming, a popular penitential movement swept northern Italy in the summer of 1399. Beginning in Genoa, crowds of people wearing white (*bianco*) robes processed behind crucifixes or banners in short itineraries to surrounding towns while praying, singing hymns, and fasting or curbing their diets. Seeking peace among their neighbors and God's

forgiveness and mercy in the face of plague, each group's arrival sparked a similar response. Bianchi pulsed in waves as far as Rome. Letters, chronicles, and even account books recorded the phenomenon and its participants, some of whom started local penitential confraternities, 11 in Florence. Despite their best efforts, plague blanketed Italy the following summer.

Friars helped organize and support confraternities as a means for focusing and deepening people's spiritual lives. Members were expected not only to carry out the required rituals and good works, but to live lives free of scandal by avoiding illicit sex, gambling, drunkenness, and theft, fraud, and other sinful crimes. Offenders were ejected from the brotherhood.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; Art Patronage; Music at Church; *Economics and Work:* Guilds; *Family and Gender:* Childhood; Death, Funerals, and Burial; Dowries; *Fashion and Appearance:* Religious Habits and Vestments; *Housing and Community:* Death in the Community; Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Poor, Aid to; Prisons; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Church Festivals and Processions; Civic Festivals; Executions; Theater, Popular; *Religion and Beliefs:* Chapels; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Crucifix; Mary, Cult of

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COUNCIL OF TRENT AND CATHOLIC REFORM

Since St. Paul's letters to the Christian communities he established, Church leaders have pursued reform. When the flock goes astray, the pastor (shepherd) is usually at fault, so most attempts at improving teaching, stiffening morals, and encouraging

the pious life had to begin with reforming the clergy. Until the 1430s the highest levels of the Church were scandalized by the absence of the papacy from Rome (the “Captivity” in Avignon) and its aftermath: the election of competing series of popes and then the appearance of a third pope. The Council of Constance ended the travesty in 1417, but weakened leadership characterized the Church for decades. While some bishops and even popes sought to be the pastors and teachers the Church needed, far too many succumbed to the greed, materialism, and ambitions characteristic of the Renaissance-era Church. Lacking competent and active supervision, parish priests too often lived immoral lives, neglected their duties, and in any case lacked necessary spiritual gifts and intellectual tools. Reformers such as Florence’s Archbishop Antoninus and the fiery prophet and preacher Girolamo Savonarola made some inroads, but the results were short-lived. Italians did, however, have religious lives structured by the work of dedicated friars and lay confraternities, which worked independently of bishops and parishes.

Ironically, in the decade before Martin Luther’s Reformation broke out in Germany, Pope Julius II and his successor the Medici Pope Leo X sponsored a reform council in Rome, the Fifth Lateran (1512–1517). It produced many good ideas for addressing weaknesses and abuses, but Leo paid them little attention. As Luther’s break with the Church became wider and more dramatic from 1517 through the 1520s, politics in Italy were absorbed by the wars that swept back and forth. In Verona, however, Bishop Gian Matteo Giberti set an example of a serious reforming bishop. He became the scourge of ill-disciplined priests and errant monks and nuns, using jail and excommunication to bring them into line. Giberti helped the poor, reconciled violent factions, aided debtors, and saw that the Church’s rituals were performed regularly and properly. By the mid-1530s the wily old Pope Paul III appointed known reformers as cardinals and had a commission gather information on what specifically needed addressing. By then, however, reform meant not only controlling sleazy and abusive behavior, but also openly stopping the spread of Protestantism. To this end, in the 1540s the Inquisition was revamped and set to work uncovering heresy; censorship was heightened; and a new, militant priestly order, the Jesuits, was created. They would prove especially effective and important as agents of change in the south, where bishops were weak and parish priests essentially owned their parishes.

After several years, the commission report pointed the way to what became the Council of Trent. Its decisions shaped the Church until the 1960s. Involving bishops, theologians, canon lawyers, and even, at times, Protestant representatives, the Council met in discontinuous sessions from 1545 to 1552 and in 1562–1563. The Church leaders, predominantly Italians, decided most issues along very conservative, Catholic lines. This was especially true of doctrinal issues such as whether good works had a role in salvation (they did) and whether one should pray to saints for aid (one

should). The form of the Bible was to be the Latin Vulgate version, and neither radically updated nor vernacular forms. The priesthood remained all male and celibate, but bishops were to see to the men's education, and from this emerged seminaries designed and staffed for the task in many dioceses. The Council also insisted that men entering the priesthood be mature, "worthy and competent," and act in ways that were "dignified, moderate, and permeated with piety": models of Christian behavior for their congregations (Mullet, 63, 66). Priests were to keep themselves apart from their flocks by dressing in the simple black robe known as a cassock, and not the fashions of the day. They were also directed to preach each Sunday and holy day in their parishes, as were bishops in their cathedral churches. For their part, bishops—187 of whom participated—were to spend most of their time in their dioceses (residency), see that priests were educated and actively overseen, and end abuses such as priests holding several positions (pluralism) or the selling of Church offices or property (simony). For both priests and bishops, competent and effective preaching headed the list of skills, and both current and new clerics were to be schooled in the art.

Churches were to be cleared of many of the medieval accumulations that made seeing the sanctuary with its altar difficult. This resulted in many churches being literally opened up by the removal of rood screens, chapel walls, monuments, and other obstructions. The Mass was declared to be the re-presentation of Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross, and a new Latin Mass-book, or Missal, reflected changes that addressed challenges by Protestants and radical reformers. The believer in the pew at Mass would not have noticed changes in the text, but she would have seen the new tabernacle, or little house for the Eucharistic Host, on the altar and heard bells rung when the priest held up the consecrated Host during the service. If attending at a major church, she might have noticed simpler music that emphasized the words rather than instrumental flourishes and much better preaching.

Trent succeeded in northern and central Italy in many ways due to the serious determination of trend-setting bishops including Agostino Valier of Verona, Antonio Altoviti in Florence, Gabriele Paleotti in Bologna, Francesco Bossi in Perugia, and most importantly St. Carlo Borromeo of Milan, who directed his 2,000 parishes and 3,000 clergy with good judgment and vigor. The popes after 1563 also contributed greatly, actively attending to their diocesan duties of reform in Rome and supporting the spirit as well as the letter of Trent. Catholic reform was fed by a constant stream of printed material aimed at priests and laypeople alike, including devotional prayer books, saints' lives, pro-papal propaganda, and pastoral manuals. Trent did, however, mean clamping down further on the press, on Christians with differing ideas about Christianity or the Church, and on Jews, none of which pressures was new. Southern Italy experienced little change beyond the work of the Jesuits in part at least because of Spanish interference, weak and ineffectual bishops, resistant parish clergy, and the general poverty of the region.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; Music at Church; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Family and Gender:* Last Wills and Testaments; *Fashion and Appearance:* Religious Habits and Vestments; Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drink:* Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community:* Neighborhood and Parish; Poor, Aid to; Villages and Village Life; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Calendars: Sacred and Profane; Church Festivals and Processions; Courtesans, Prostitutes, and the Sex Trade; Noble Pursuits; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Churches; Clergy, Catholic; Confraternities; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Inquisitions; Monks and Monasteries; Nuns and Nunneries; Pilgrims and Shrines; Protestantism; Sacramentals; Sacraments, Catholic

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CRUCIFIX

According to the Bible and Christian belief Jesus of Nazareth was executed in Jerusalem by the Roman military at the request of the Jewish Temple authorities. The means was that typical for thieves, rebels, and other notorious outlaws. Roman soldiers tortured Jesus before nailing him to an upright wooden cross, a series of gruesome events known as the Passion. Though dead, Jesus came back to life, an event remembered as the Resurrection and celebrated on Easter Sunday. The Passion, with its culmination in the Crucifixion, has long been commemorated each year during the week leading to Easter. What is considered the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross is believed to have opened the gates of paradise, making possible the eternal salvation of souls. Jesus's Passion and its great effect are also commemorated and celebrated at each Catholic Mass. For this reason, the crucifix, which is a depiction or image of Jesus hung on the Cross, must be on or near the altar during the Mass.

The purpose of a crucifix is to remind viewers of Jesus's sacrifice, and ideally to evoke an emotional or spiritual response of piety and sorrow for one's sin. Simply, Jesus died to make up or atone for people's sinfulness. Thus, a viewer's own sinfulness is part of the reason Jesus suffered so much and died. Crosses were common as jewelry and as decorative patterns, but the crucifix was treated more reverently. It hung from the end of a rosary and might hang from one's neck.

Preachers carried one to display to crowds as they preached, following St. Paul in I Corinthians 1:23, “we preach Christ crucified,” and priests presented a sculpted crucifix to the dying to kiss as a sign of their devotion. Paintings of the Crucifixion that belonged to individuals appeared in books of hours and other prayer books and in small hinged panels (diptychs), often paired with a Madonna and Child or a Pietà, which depicted the dead Jesus removed from the Cross. Street corner or way-side tabernacles often displayed Crucifixion scenes, and printed religious materials might be illustrated with a Crucifixion even when that was not the main topic. The crucifix also appeared on liturgical vestments (clothing) and etched into the gold vessels and plate used in the Mass. Religious processions through churches or town streets or out of towns to shrines were led by a tall man carrying high a sculpted crucifix on a tall pole. Popularly, the crucifix was a talisman for healing or other hoped-for miracles, while demons feared the symbol and their human servants desecrated it by spitting or even defecating on it. Its power as a symbol was almost limitless.

Paintings or sculpted groups of the Crucifixion had an iconography or symbolic language based on Scripture and tradition. Jesus is nailed through the palms of his hands and with a single nail through both feet. He is naked except for a loincloth and wears a crown woven of thorns mashed onto his head during the passion. Renaissance depictions generally show his body limp in death and his side slashed by the spear of the soldier Longinus. Over his head is the wooden sign “INRI”—Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews—ordered by Pontius Pilate. At the foot of the cross a skull representing Adam is often depicted. Legend had it that Adam was buried on Calvary Hill, and Jesus atoned for sin brought into the world by Adam and Eve. The sky is dark perhaps stormy, and both sun and moon appear. Jesus’s Cross is flanked by those bearing two thieves who are tied rather than nailed to theirs, and by the figures of John the Apostle and Jesus’s mother, Mary, who is sometimes swooning into the arms of other women. Early Renaissance depictions, such as that by Giotto in Padua, show angels caught wailing in mid-flight. Related scenes that sometimes appear in sequences of panels include Jesus being crowned with thorns, which usually stands for the Passion as a whole, Jesus carrying the cross to Calvary Hill, and the deposition, featuring Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, and other men struggling to lower Jesus’s body from the Cross, while the faithful women grieve below. Finally, Jesus is sometimes depicted dead in his mother Mary’s lap, an ensemble (the Pietà) made famous in several versions by Michelangelo. It is a theological bookend to the very popular Madonna and Child, some sixteenth-century versions of which have the sleeping child lying sprawled in his mother’s lap as if dead. A more popular post-crucifixion scene is the symbolic *pietà*, or man of sorrows, with the dead Jesus half-in and half above a tomb-like wall.

Large painted or sculpted crucifixes hung above or were anchored in the tall screens that separated the sanctuary from the nave of large churches. They are known as rood screens from an archaic English word for the Cross. Large, early painted ones used panels that were cross-shaped, a form made famous by that at San Damiano, which spoke to St. Francis of Assisi. The lower portion was often flanked by a series of related biblical scenes along what is known as the apron, or John and Mary might appear alongside Jesus's hands at the ends of the cross-bar. Sculpted and painted versions replaced the older format during the fifteenth century. These were generally of wood and hung from the ceiling. The sculptor Donatello produced one in wood for Santa Croce church in Florence and in the 1440s cast a life-size version in bronze for the high altar in St. Anthony's Basilica, Padua. Unlike some grotesque and tortured German treatments, Italian crucifixes tend to be peaceful and even elegant.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; Sculpture; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Chapels; Christian Art in the Home; Churches; Confraternities; Memorials *Ex Voto*; Sacramentals; Sacraments, Catholic

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DEMONS, THE DEVIL, AND EXORCISMS

Renaissance Christian Italy inherited its profound beliefs in Satan—the devil—and his demonic minions. Belief in harmful spirits was part of ancient folk traditions as well as Classical literary sources. Satan appears in the Old Testament as the tormentor of Job, and in the New Testament as tempter of Jesus in the desert. Christian writers had long identified Eve's enticer in Eden as Satan, and likewise the serpent crushed by the woman's foot in Apocalypse. Scripture recounts how Jesus and his followers drove out—or exorcized—evil spirits or demons that had possessed the unfortunate, and saints' lives had their heroes battle swarms of spirits that tempted or tormented them. Dante the poet and late medieval artists did much to shape the image of the evil ones in the imaginations of pope and peasant alike.



Between 1500 and 1503, Luca Signorelli (ca. 1445–1523) painted a fresco cycle of the end times in Orvieto's Cathedral, from which this detail of the demons and the damned is taken. (Alesandro Vannini/Corbis via Getty Images)

Satan commands an army of vile spirits that hate God and humanity, and uses human weakness as a means of leading people away from their creator. The devil envies God and humans' opportunity to join Him in heaven, while hell is the final resting place for Satan, demons, and people they persuade to reject God through sin. These entities are malicious, cruel, violent, arrogant, and ugly; they lie and know both human nature and the future; can shape shift, and have sex with women; but cannot force one to sin. Just as Satan's and demons' free will led them to reject God, so people's free will can lead them toward evil and damnation or—with the help of God's grace—away from them. The belief in hell and its tortures was quite literal and vivid: demons used claws, teeth, tools, and weapons; the damned were whipped, impaled, cooked, devoured, burned, boiled, disemboweled, fed filth, drowned, and forced to fight each other eternally. Dante's verses, preachers' sermons, devotional books, and painters' *Last Judgment* scenes brought to life the terrors that awaited those who chose to stand apart from the Church and its sacraments. Artists reveled in depicting the horrific and terrifying. Demons had the feet of goats or birds; were horned, tusked, and covered with hair or scales; had tails, bat wings and ears, or were reptilian or amphibian, dragon-like or wolfish. Satan was trapped in the deepest part of hell. While awaiting his eventual release, he devoured the souls of the lost. Dante encased him in ice and gave him three

mouths. In San Gimignano he is portrayed with an anus/vagina through which the miserable souls exit his digestive tract.

On earth, the devil's presence was felt when bad things happened to good people; peasants' crops and flocks suddenly succumbed to disease; and the mentally ill or epileptic wandered into town. Certain kinds of people were associated by tradition with the devil. Those who naturally had a "melancholic" humor, including artists and scholars, were considered especially prone to attract demons. Apparently, the forces of darkness were drawn to the dominant "black bile" in the melancholic's body. Physicians prescribed special diets and exercise to rebalance the body's humors, and if needed, a priest could exorcize any malignant spirits. People with extreme and obvious emotional, physical, or psychological problems were often considered to be possessed by demons. Among the more sophisticated this was not an automatic diagnosis, and both clergy and physicians were increasingly careful to distinguish true demonic possession from medical pathology.

Concerning witches and sorcerers, demonic forces formed pacts with the willing, who sought supernatural power and assistance in exchange for their souls and the promise to bring more souls to hell. Rather than fading during the Renaissance era, belief in witches grew and flourished. The revival of the Inquisition in the 1540s popularized the possibilities of witchcraft, and its court records reveal a great deal about the phenomenon. Unfortunate women and men admitted to attending sabbats, at which they supposedly had intercourse with demons or witnessed others doing so. While never denying the existence and roles of evil spirits, many judges denied the witches' claims to flying off to consort with the Evil One, choosing instead to understand them as demonic delusions.

Two other groups associated in the popular and elite mind with the devil were Jews and, especially after the 1510s, heretical Christians. That Jews by definition did not accept that Jesus was God was clear evidence of demonic influence, since the demonic avoided all things holy and led people away from the "truth." In Scripture Jesus called the Jews sons of the devil (John 8:44) and in Apocalypse/Revelation the author John refers to "synagogues of Satan" (2:9, 3:9). Legal problems arose when Jews who had converted to Catholicism either retained or went back to Jewish beliefs or rituals, essentially rejecting Christianity. The other group who rejected proper Christianity was the various types of Catholics who were led by the devil to reject the Church in favor of Protestantism or some other heresy. While neither the "Judaizing" nor heretical Christian was necessarily possessed, the effect of the demonic in his or her life was assumed.

Judaism and Islam as well as Christianity understood exorcism as the driving out of a demonic force from inside an otherwise innocent person. Renaissance Catholicism tested for possession: did the possessed/demon speak unusual languages; did he or she show unusual knowledge or extreme strength; was there an

aversion to religious items such as a crucifix; were there dark mood swings, raging blasphemies, or the vomiting of impossible things such as glass or keys? If so, a Catholic exorcist, usually a priest, carried out the ritual in a public place such as a church or shrine. Exorcists' manuals agreed he had to be humble, faith-filled, and utterly reliant on God, filled with pity but devoid of curiosity and well prepared by prayer, fasting, confession, and the Eucharist. Details of the words and actions differed across time and place, until the Church eventually codified them in its manual of rituals, the *Rituale Romanum* (Roman Rituals).

See also: *Arts*: Art, Sacred; *Religion and Beliefs*: Bible; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Inquisitions; Jews and Judaism; Magic; Protestantism; Saints and Their Cults; Witches and Sorcerers

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FRIARS

In the early 1200s a new type of Catholic clergy emerged: the mendicant orders or friars ("brothers"). These men differed from parish priests in that they did not serve parishes nor were they under the authority of the bishops. Rather, they lived by a rule (*regula*) like monks, and obeyed provincial authorities and the rule of their founder. Like monks, friars lived together, but in convents rather than monasteries, and unlike monks they worked directly with the people: preaching, providing sacraments, advising, teaching, and staffing charitable institutions. They were created to fill the gap created in cities by diocesan or parish clergy who were too often undereducated and less than fervent toward their increasingly demanding congregations. They also took on tasks that neither monasteries nor parishes were prepared to, such as teaching in universities and their convents, serving as missionaries, and conducting inquisitions. Friars were mendicants, that is they supported themselves on charity alone, and in this they differed from monks and parish clergy and endeared themselves to both the poor and the guilt-ridden rich who accepted

their advice in directing their charity. Some of this went to building convents in which the friars lived, and adjacent churches in which they worshipped, preached, and provided the sacraments to all who came.

Italy had a variety of mendicant orders, but five were most prominent: Franciscans (Order of Friars Minor or OFM), Dominicans (Order of Preachers or OP), Augustinians (Order of St. Augustine or OSA), Carmelites (Order of the Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel or OCarm), and the Servites (Order of the Friar Servants of Mary or OFS), founded by seven Florentines and recognized by the pope in 1304. Augustinians trace their rule to the early Church theologian Augustine of Hippo, but the order was created by the uniting of several religious groups in Tuscany in the 1250s. Carmelites claim the Old Testament prophet Elias as an inspiration for God-fearing monks who lived on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land until the twelfth century. After migrating to Europe they were officially approved as an order in 1274 and exchanged the monastic life for the active life of serving people's spiritual and physical needs.

The largest and most important orders in Italy were the Franciscans, founded by Francis of Assisi in the 1220s, and the Dominicans, founded by the Spaniard Dominic de Guzmán about the same time. Francis had famously rejected the materialism of his world and embraced poverty, simplicity of life, and service. His followers, though often well educated, were known for understanding human weakness and for striving to improve the spiritual lives of rich and poor alike. They preached folksy sermons to which people could easily relate and worked tirelessly with indigents, the crippled, the dying, and others in need. They arbitrated conflicts; educated and counseled the young; and stressed Christian ideals such as peace, love, and forgiveness. Dressed in sandals and rough brown robes tied with rope, they walked Italy's roads, setting good examples and preaching whenever the occasion arose. Dominicans tended to come from higher social classes than Franciscans, and their founder emphasized mental as well as spiritual preparation. Among mendicants they were the intellectuals, trained to teach boys and girls as well as preach to their parents and dispute with heretics or non-Catholics. In Latin *Domini canes* means "hounds of the Lord." Dominicans, often symbolized by Dalmatian dogs because of their black and white robes, were known for their roles as inquisitors and preachers and writers against Protestantism. Their popular sermons were likely to be more intellectual and less folksy than those of Franciscans. Together the two groups complemented each other in reviving and feeding the spiritual lives of Renaissance-era cities.

Because of their chosen poverty and piety, mendicants quickly became the beneficiaries of rich people's charity. They were the voluntary poor, the support of whom was well-placed charity. Though much of this was filtered to the poor, plenty of donations helped build the great churches and convents that dotted urban landscapes. Because friars were not tied to territorial parishes, people from all over a

region would flock to its churches for special holidays and when well-known preachers gave cycles of sermons during Advent or Lent. Their churches also served as sites for burial and burial chapels for supporters. Church floors were covered with carved slabs marking their final resting places, and narrow cubicles came to line aisle walls as families claimed their very public sacred spaces. Donors lavished cash on chapel art, priest's vestments, and gold candlesticks and chalices, but also paid the friars for the space and for saying Masses for their dead. In royal Naples kings provided patronage to mendicant churches such as Santa Maria Donnaregina, San Lorenzo, Santa Maria la Nova, and Santa Chiara. The huge tomb of King Ladislao (after 1414) dominates the wall behind the altar of the Augustinian church of San Giovanni a Carbonara. Early Renaissance masterpieces by the Florentine Masaccio grace Dominican Santa Maria Novella (the *Trinità*) and the Carmelite church (the Brancacci Chapel). Because of their perceived sanctity and popularity Italian *signori* (ruling lords) embraced the orders. Among others, Cosimo de' Medici lavished support on Franciscans, Dominicans, and Augustinians alike.

Common folk also embraced friars for their piety and ability to relate to the people. The bishops' institutional parishes collected tithes and were often seen as oppressive, while friars demanded nothing. Friars also made good confessors since, unlike the local parish priest, they did not tend to stay long in town. During epidemics parish priests often fled but friars remained to tend the sick and give the sacraments to the dying, perhaps the greatest sign of their dedication.

See also: Arts: Art, Sacred; Art Patronage; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Economics and Work*: Credit and Loans; *Family and Gender*: Education of Children; Last Wills and Testaments; *Fashion and Appearance*: Religious Habits and Vestments; Sumptuary Laws; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Jewish Communities; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; News; *Religion and Beliefs*: Chapels; Churches; Clergy, Catholic; Confraternities; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Inquisitions; Monks and Monasteries; Nuns and Nunneries; Preachers and Preaching; Sacramentals; Sacraments, Catholic

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HEAVEN, HELL, AND PURGATORY

Heaven and hell have always been the carrot and stick of the Catholic Church. After death, the souls of obedient sons and daughters of the Church reside with God and His angels in heaven, a spiritual “place” of eternal joy imagined to be located beyond the sky. Hell is reserved for the unbaptized and the seriously disobedient baptized. It is a place of eternal sadness and punishment, of separation from God and located beneath the earth’s surface. Here all are miserable, even hell’s ruler, Satan, whose minions conduct fiendish tortures. He was once among the brightest of all angels, but arrogance and pride set him and his followers against his Lord and the faithful angels in a cosmic struggle he was bound to lose. Only by seducing Eve, the first among women, to disobey God’s explicit command did Satan separate humans from their Creator through sin. It was only by abusing God’s great gift of free will that humans fell from grace and acquired the tendency to sin that St. Augustine labeled concupiscence. Without divinely supplied grace all remained fated to hell, even His Chosen People the faithful Hebrews of the Old Testament. Only the life, death, and resurrection of God’s Son, Jesus, could open heaven to the faithful.

First entered the faithful Hebrews who had been promised this salvation, then those whose baptism and good life—and often death—witnessed to their faith. Jesus rules heaven, along with His Mother, Mary, as His Queen. Heaven, then, is the goal of all people, though God reveals it only directly through His Church. Through preaching, teaching, art, literature, its saints, and above all the grace-inducing sacraments, the Church brings people to worship God and ultimately to heaven. Can God save those outside the Church, born, perhaps, in the wrong time and place? The Church definitively answered that in the positive just after 1300. God can save whomever He wills.

Purgatory is never directly mentioned in Scripture, though the Bible does mention a spiritual trial by fire (Psalm 16 [17]:3) and prayers for the salvation of the dead (2 Maccabees 12:46). From these hints, and human hope, the Church decided there must be a place—perhaps an island near Jerusalem or mountain between earth and heaven—to which the souls of the sinful but not terribly sinful people go for a painful purging or cleansing before being welcomed into heavenly bliss. Souls in purgatory are living in pure hope, since all know they are being prepared for heaven, a position officially adopted at the Council of Lyons in 1274. The souls’ time of purgation is limited, depending on the extent of their sinfulness, and purgatory itself disappears with the Last Judgment. Prayers and good works of those left behind can convince God to shorten this time for sufferers if performed on their behalves. Prayers for the dead became almost a commodity sought by common folk and provided by monks and nuns. Decorated chapels and other memorials drew the attention of passersby who were asked for their prayers. Most wills

provided money for Masses said on behalf of the testator's soul. Recipients of charity in hospitals or orphanages were also expected to pray for both living and deceased benefactors.

The Florentine poet Dante Alighieri vividly anchored the next world in the imaginations of readers of and listeners to his *Divine Comedy*. Each location received one-third of the text, beginning with a hope-less hell filled with sinners being punished in ways that ironically reflected their worst sins. This idea of *contrapasso* predated Dante, who used it to devastating effect as a commentary on the politics of his day. He then visited purgatory and ultimately paradise, where saints and angels are ranged in great arcs nearer or farther from the ineffable light and omnipotent love that is God. Dante both borrowed from and shaped pictorial and literary depictions of heaven and hell.

But people most commonly came into contact with the afterlife in and around churches and preachers. Churches and chapels featured frescoes and sculptures of the damned, notably Lucas Signorelli's fresco of the *Last Judgment* in San Brizio Chapel in Orvieto's Cathedral (c. 1499). Of course, medieval depictions of the Inferno continued to admonish churchgoers from carved portals and mosaics such as that in the dome of Florence's baptistery. Heavenly scenes balanced infernal ones in *Last Judgments* and dominated altarpieces. Many of these featured saints conversing or in postures of praise before God's throne, and Mary's coronation as Queen of Heaven was attended by hosts of angels. During church festivals confraternities did their best to evoke fear or wonder with their pageant carts featuring demonic smoke or celestial choirs in white robes. All of this was put into context by the ubiquitous preachers who railed frighteningly of the fires of hell and purgatory. Dante's scenes of terrible but deserved suffering spilled from the mouths of gaunt Franciscans, echoing in the great churches of Italy. Preachers also extolled the beauties and comforts of eternal life with God and His saints that accompanied salvation. Arguably, the fear of eternal pain proved more moving than promises of heavenly bliss and glory, perhaps because suffering was more commonly experienced than joy.

Purgatory was clearly second best to heaven, but infinitely to be preferred to hell. Denounced by Protestants as a fiction, it tended to surface when Church officials were peddling indulgences in towns or advertising shrines that offered them to pilgrims. These were based on the Gospel's granting of power to the Church to bind and forgive people's sins, that is, to hold to or release them from spiritual punishment (John 20:23). They were considered valid for oneself, or they could help a dead loved one escape some of his or her time in purgatory.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; Dante in Popular Culture; *Family and Gender:* Death, Funerals, and Burial; Last Wills and Testaments; *Food and Drink:* Feasting

and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Death in the Community; *Religion and Beliefs*: Bible; Chapels; Demons, the Devil, and Exorcisms; Friars; Pilgrims and Shrines; Preachers and Preaching; Protestantism; Sacraments, Catholic; Saints and Their Cults

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INQUISITIONS

The Catholic Church had a near-monopoly on later medieval Italian Christianity. It did, however, face challenges from groups and individuals it deemed to hold and teach unacceptable versions of the faith. From the later 1510s these were joined by members of new Christian sects and denominations spawned by the Protestant Reformation. Converted Jews and Muslims who secretly held to their previous religious traditions, and Catholics who held and taught beliefs that diverged from those of the Church—including the use of magic and sorcery—also prompted correction and/or punishment by special Church authorities. Together these authorities and their courts were known as the Holy Office of the Inquisition, though there were always several at work separately in Italy. By the sixteenth century Church officials in Rome, Venice, and other city-states had their own legal and judicial machinery, and in Sicily and Sardinia the infamous Spanish Inquisition operated. All told there were 40 local Italian tribunals. Each investigated questionable behavior; rounded up and tried suspected dissenters, heretics, and backsliding converts; and saw to it that the local government punished those it found guilty and who

remained obstinate in their guilt. The court was technically under the jurisdiction of the local bishop, though proceedings were conducted by a trained inquisitor, usually a Dominican or Franciscan friar—or even a specially appointed cardinal—no younger than 40.

A proceeding began with a denunciation to the local Church authority by someone familiar with the accused; denunciations could not be anonymous. The accuser and perhaps other witnesses were questioned about the allegations and in many instances the case was dropped without the accused even being aware of the inquiry. In Venice between 1544 and 1550, for example, 150 people were denounced but were never even notified; 24 others went to trial, and most of these were convicted. If a case had merit, further investigation resulted in a formal indictment and the accused was taken into custody. At this point the accused could confess to personal guilt and express contrition for what he or she had done or said. This is the result for which the court always aimed, since the truth was established and the accused reconciled with God and His Church. A sentence, if any, was generally light, especially if the convicted were very old or considered ignorant. If the court suspected that others were involved, however, the prisoner was pressed for names and even subjected to judicial torture until the court was satisfied.

If the accused claimed innocence, a trial took place in secret. If the accused requested an attorney, the court had to provide one; he or she could also request a change of venue or of judge if there was an apparent conflict of interest or personal issues. Sworn witness testimony and evidence were compiled and presented to the accused, who prepared his defense. Prosecution witnesses could be cross-examined, but the inquisitor had to ask the accused's questions. If witnesses had known biases against the accused, the inquisitor had to balance their testimony. The accused also called witnesses or had depositions taken from them. All testimony was recorded verbatim by a notary. The procedures were based on Roman law practice, and as in that legal tradition the accused was considered to be guilty and had to prove his or her innocence. Also as in Roman law, if the accused insisted on his or her innocence, and the court disagreed, he or she would be tortured in stages. First came the threat; then the instruments themselves were shown to him or her; finally they were applied in steps, from least to most painful. By this point, the court considered the body to be expendable, and it was hoped torture would result in eternal soul-saving confession. If the crime warranted, execution was carried out by the state. In Rome, from 1553 through 1601 the Inquisition condemned about 135, though between 1542 and 1761 only 97, or about 2% of those tried were killed. By contrast, in England between 1542 and 1550, Henry VIII executed 308 for opposing his religious changes. In Venice, during the sixteenth century, of 1,560 tried only 14 (1%) were executed, and only 25 died in custody. By comparison, the Venetian government hanged or decapitated 168 convicts, mostly for

theft. Death could also mean burning, drowning, or strangulation; while lighter sentences included public statements of guilt (abjuration) and prison sentences, service in the state's galleys, exile, or, as in the famous case of Galileo, house arrest. In sixteenth-century Sicily 319 convicts were burned in effigy only, while 252 underwent actual execution.

Different times and regions displayed different patterns of charges leading to Inquisitional trials. In the later fourteenth century there were isolated trials in Italy for heresy and demonic magic, and the courts were largely dormant until 1542, when Pope Paul III restructured the institution and regularized proceedings. Most statistical studies of the Inquisition start from the 1540s. Venice, 1547–1630, tried 2,045 cases: 40% were for “Lutheranism” (generic Protestantism); 18.5% for magic; 7% for keeping or selling forbidden books; 3% for blasphemy; and the remainder for assorted religious infringements, including backsliding into Judaism or Islam. To the north in Friuli, 1557–1610, 983 cases were tried: 31.2% for magic, 27% for heresy (including Lutheranism), 22% for eating meat at prohibited times (a sign of Protestantism), and 1.5% for blasphemy. Between 1564 and 1620, bishops' courts in Naples tried 1,756 cases: 38.5% for magic, 11% for backsliding into Islam, 7% for proclaiming heretical propositions, and 2.7% for blasphemy. In Sicily, 1560–1614, 30% were tried for blasphemy/heresy, 27% for reverting to Islam, 9.3% for bigamy, 8.3% for superstition, and 7.8% for “Lutheranism,” while 48% of accusations from 1501 to 1600 were for reverting to Judaism.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Housing and Community*: Foreign Communities; Jewish Communities; *Religion and Beliefs*: Bible; Clergy, Catholic; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Jews and Judaism; Magic; Protestantism; Witches and Sorcerers

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JEWS AND JUDAISM

The Jewish family was the center of Jewish life. The synagogue, or temple or *scola* (school) as Jews often called it, however, was the center of Jewish community and

communal prayer life. When a Jewish community was settling in an Italian city or town, the first request of the group's leaders was for a synagogue.

Rome's oldest synagogue was founded in 1337 near the Theater of Marcellus, but was moved in 1442 to a spot near the fish market, where the present Tempio stands. By 1471 the city had six, and more still in the sixteenth century. Each was the home of an ethnic group such as the Catalans, French, or Germans; Italians from different regions had five. Ferrara's first synagogue was a gift from a Roman Jew and was approved by the duke in the 1480s. By the 1590s there were 10 or 11 serving a Jewish population of 2,000. Because Jews could not own land, they usually had to convert an existing building, usually a house, to their purposes. Removing Christian imagery required special permission. However large the worship space, it had benches for the congregants, lots of natural and artificial light for ease of reading, a large, prominent cupboard or Ark at one end in which copies of the Torah were kept, and a central platform and lectern from which the sacred text was read during services and sermons were given. Men occupied the body of the space, while women sat behind a screen lest they distract the males.

At the center of Jewish worship was the Torah, or text of the first five books of the Hebrew Bible. These were believed to have been written by Moses and contained the very heart of what it meant to be a Jew. The texts themselves, in Hebrew, were written on scrolls by special scribes who were charged with making absolutely no mistakes in words, letters, or other markings. Wealthy congregants had expensive copies produced and donated to their synagogues. For Christians, literacy was an option until the Reformation emphasized individual reading of Scripture. In Jewish families it was an expectation, and religious education was not an option.

Jewish girls received training at home in preparation for becoming housewives and mothers. Unlike most Christian girls, they were usually taught to read and write in Italian, and to slaughter animals in the acceptable manner. Wealthy families hired special tutors who might teach girls as well as boys. Some tutors were lawyers or rabbis, and the emphasis was on reading the Torah. In many communities the goal was for a boy to be able to read it in Italian and Aramaic translation by age five. Eventually, it would be memorized, often in Hebrew. Lessons often required the composition of letters addressed to their fathers, a very useful form of rhetoric. Older women hosted boarding schools in which boys were enrolled and closely disciplined. Communities were expected to provide poorer families with schools or tutors as a form of charity. By their teens, boys attended Yeshiva schools, which concentrated on Jewish theology and philosophy, and study of the Talmud. These are often favorably compared with Christian universities, and were located in major centers such as Padua and Venice.

While Christian authorities never condoned the destruction of Torah scrolls, they did directly attack the Jewish texts known as the Talmud. These were ancient

writings filled with commentaries on Hebrew Scripture and reasoned opinions on Jewish law. They were carefully studied at Yeshivot and relied upon by rabbis, or teachers, who were the communities' ritual and judicial leaders. While Torah was part of the Christian Old Testament, the Talmud was the distinctively Jewish interpretation of it. From the Christian perspective, it was wrong, was an insult to God, and stood in the way of converting Jews. Therefore it had to be attacked. By the mid-sixteenth century Venetian printers were forbidden to print Jewish books or even texts in Hebrew. The Talmud was placed on the *Index of Forbidden Books*, along with other texts by Jewish authors, and copies were seized from shops, homes, and printers. It was publicly burned by the Inquisition in Venice and Rome in 1553. Roman officials of the Anti-blasphemy magistracy repeated the scene in 1568. By then perhaps hundreds of thousands of Jewish books, from poetry to theology, had been tossed into the flames.

Keeping Kosher in Umbria

It is well known that certain fifteenth-century Franciscan preachers targeted Jews with verbal barbs as they sought to keep or build walls between “good” Christians and “pernicious” Jews. One target was the consumption of meat that was slaughtered ritually, according to Jewish dietary law. Christians were eating “Jewish” meat, but Jews would only eat what their culture dictated. Stirred up by the sons of St. Francis, Umbrian authorities occasionally sought to prohibit ritual slaughter. Jewish leaders responded by claiming vegetarianism was unhealthy and threatening to leave and take their businesses with them. Usually the fervor died down.

But Judaism was unharmed by the bonfires, since its survival took place within the family structure. Rabbis and synagogues were important, but the family was vital. Jewish families were no less patriarchal than Christian ones, perhaps even more so. The sense of duty to one's parents, especially one's father, was deeply embedded. His name provided his offsprings' identity and formed the basis for the honor they held in the eyes of coreligionists and Christians alike. Marriages were strategically pursued, and dowries and grooms' counter-dowries helped set the new family up. But Jews had no equivalent to convents in which to place unmarried daughters, weddings took place in synagogues in the presence of at least ten men, and divorce was permitted: all differences from contemporary Christian practice. The Jewish home and the family gathered in it provided the stage for most Jewish religious rituals, from the bris, or circumcision, of a newborn to the preparation of the dead for burial. In between, the dining table served to unify the

family unit and reinforce each new generation's Jewish identity, as at each Pass-over Seder.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Banks and Bankers; Book Printing and Sales; Credit and Loans; *Family and Gender*: Education of Children; *Food and Drink*: Diet and Social Status; *Housing and Community*: Jewish Communities

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MAGIC

For the modern audience magic is a matter of illusion, a professional trick, something that cannot be what it seems to be. For people of the Renaissance era, however, magic was the natural effect of occult (hidden) means. The magus—whether an old woman in her hut, a flashy charlatan striding his stage in a swarming *piazza*, or a learned scholar in his study—had learned how to manipulate nature by means not known to or understood by the uninitiated. He or she had learned to read the secret language of nature or the spirit world so that its many forces might submit to control nature, give up what is hidden, heal what is broken, or reveal the future. With gemstones or amulets she could direct the rays of celestial bodies to ends that only she understood. The magus had power in the society that recognized it. To the villager the old woman who understood magic could hurl a curse or lift one, inflict a disease or cure it, find a lost object or make something disappear, conjure up a storm or an aphrodisiac or even a demon.

To conjure a demon was, however, to cross a line, whether the effect was good or ill. Should one consort in any way with an evil spirit or the devil himself, then the



One form of non-religious prophecy was palm reading, practiced here in a woodcut illustrating the Chiromantia by fifteenth-century author Andrea Corvo. This version is dated to 1581, though stylistically it is much older. (Palm Reading from “Chiromantia” by Andrea Corvo, 1581 (woodcut), Italian School, (Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice, Italy/Archives Charmet/Bridgeman Images))

lets, talismans, elixirs, incantations, spells, and fortunes alongside their medicinal salves, potions, and medical procedures. Indeed, the line between medical healing and magical healing was a very thin one.

Magic was a subject of interest to scholars who searched Classical texts for formulas and incantations that promised to unlock secrets of nature and of harnessing the powers of stars. Some works, such as the so-called *Key of Solomon*, reflected ancient Jewish mysticism called Kaballah and relied on spirits—though not demons, they claimed—for success. This was a serious pursuit by men such as the Neapolitans Bernardino Telesio, Giambattista della Porta, and Tommaso

result was labeled witchcraft or sorcery and ceased to be acceptable magic practice. The line was drawn in 1376 by Nicolau Eymeric, a Catalan inquisitor, who prescribed death for anyone cooperating with the forces of evil. Inflicting harm on another by use of natural (as opposed to demonic) magic was also forbidden, though penalties tended to be lighter. Abortion-inducing drugs were generally outlawed, as were providing poisons to be used on people and casting spells that forced people to do things otherwise against their wills, such as falling in love. But the common magus often lived in the shadows, out of the view of authorities or ignored by them. Almost anyone could possess these powers: the daughter who learned them from her mother; the concubine taught by the priest; the physician, barber-surgeon, monk, friar, apothecary, Jew, midwife, botanist, or charlatan. These last often made their reputations as types of magi, hawking amu-

Campanella, and the Florentine physician and philosopher Marsiglio Ficino, who translated magical texts for Cosimo de' Medici. Many princely courts featured magicians alongside their astrologers and alchemists. The rich and powerful sought to benefit from the magus and his magic as readily as did the poor and ignorant.

The world of common folk had a whole hidden dimension in which extraordinary things happened. Bread and wine became God at church; the respected priest spoke of angels, demons, and spiritual power; disease suddenly struck crops or herds; infants died of no apparent causes; special people seemed able to injure or cure in unnatural ways. Words, written or chanted, had special powers, as did objects worn around the neck or buried in the moonlight. Neapolitan red coral, often seen in paintings, was especially popular, and often given to newborns for protection. Sometimes powerful words were written on food and eaten or on parchment that was dipped into water that was then drunk for effect. The line between religion and magic must have seemed thin indeed, especially when the magus was a priest or friar or elder nun in a convent. Popular manuals for the literate would-be magus were available, though generally frowned upon by Church authorities.

Early in the Renaissance magic was a gray area in many ways, and authorities ignored much of what went on. The Church clearly had a monopoly over the spirit world, however, and magic that relied on demons, angels, or saints was automatically suspect. Some magic was associated with Jews, witches, or heretics, and this was also proceeded against by the Inquisition or other Church and many civil courts. Friars such as San Bernardino of Siena and Savonarola, and bishops such as Antoninus of Florence and Charles Borromeo of Milan preached and legislated against magical practices of all kinds, especially anything related to spirits or the use of magical amulets. Mountebanks who publicly touted their magical prowess or products drew fire for being frauds who made money from the gullible and desperate. Physicians and apothecaries resented any competition from unlicensed healers or herb-sellers. Recognized midwives resisted the interference of practitioners who used strange approaches that might harm mother or child. All but the most sophisticated feared the evil eye, spells, and curses. The Imperial Criminal Code in 1532 set as penalty for causing harm with magic death by burning. The Council of Trent forbade any dealings with spiritual entities, including exorcism by laypeople. Between 1564 and 1620 Neapolitan Inquisition courts tried 676 cases of magical arts, which was 38.5% of its total caseload. In 1559 all books on fortune-telling or divination were placed on the Church's *Index of Forbidden Books*, and in 1585 Pope Gregory XIII banned fortune-telling in any form: casting dice, palm-reading, "reading" the stars or natural signs, using mirrors or crystal balls.

See also: *Arts*: Novella; *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; *Family and Gender*: Fertility, Conception, and Contraception; Health and Illness; Pregnancy;

Fashion and Appearance: Gems and Jewelry; Housing and Community: Jewish Communities; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; Villages and Village Life; Politics and Warfare: Crime and Punishments; Recreation and Social Customs: Pornography and Erotica; Religion and Beliefs: Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Inquisitions; Sacramentals; Witches and Sorcerers; Science and Technology: Alchemy; Astrology; Collecting and Collections

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MARY, CULT OF

According to the Bible, Jesus was born from the miraculous union of the divine Holy Spirit and the Jewish woman Mary. She is believed to have been a virgin at the time of Jesus's birth (Nativity) and appears in Gospel accounts at certain key moments, including the Crucifixion, and in Acts at Pentecost. Early traditions claimed Mary was taken bodily into Heaven, and thus left few relics and no grave. Yet Mary's unique role in the Christian story, and the qualities ascribed to her—virginity (lifelong, according to Catholics), humility, obedience to God, and love of humankind—have drawn devoted followers to her. Many have seen her as the model Christian, for both men and women. Where her popularity eclipses even that of Jesus, her devotees have feared God's anger or justice, or their own sinfulness, and rely on Mary's intercession with her Son to gain forgiveness, protection, healing, or other favors. This attention manifested in peasant superstitions and the writings of the Church's most brilliant thinkers; reports of apparitions and mystical experiences; and magnificent works of art, literature, and music. Mary's cult, which is at least officially linked tightly to Jesus's role as Redeemer and Head of the Church, grew out of centuries of meditation, hope, and reliance on her influence with her Son.

Renaissance-era Italy fully embraced Mary's cult. Mary was a patroness and protector not only of women named Maria, but also of cities, such as the warring

state of Florence and Siena, of guilds and confraternities, and of religious orders, including the Servites and Dominicans. She was a universal intercessor, unlike most other saints, who had a specialty, such as ensuring healthy childbirths or protecting against death by plague. Mary represented the Church and was considered the universal Mother to all who sought her help. One popular image associated with her protection was the *Misericordia*, in which a huge Mary, usually overseen by the Trinity, envelops a group of devotees with her cloak. In some versions, plague arrows shot by angels bounce harmlessly off it. The devotees might be members of a confraternity in their distinctive robes, or, if a city was being protected, a range of figures from worker to bishop. The Council of Trent banned this image, as it implied powers beyond those recognized by the Church. Images needed to express Mary's dependence on her Son, and not her independent power.

Far more acceptable and commonly depicted was the Madonna and Child. Scores of variations on this theme have the pair seated or standing, inside or out, alone or with saints. Baby Jesus might be asleep; giving blessing; reaching for his cousin John; handling a symbolic bird, flower, or fruit; or embracing a lamb, symbolizing his adult passion. Mary may seem stoically to ignore her Son, protectively reach for him, offer Him her breast, or sorrowfully contemplate His mystery. In most Italian versions, Mary and Jesus are joined by saints—from a pair special to a patron to a veritable army. As Queen of Heaven (her Son is King) she “rules” over the saints, who attend the pair as courtiers would a monarch. Sixteenth-century depictions often pair up the saints who are said to be silently conducting a spiritual “conversation” (*sacra conversazione*) with Mary and Jesus. Mary also appears in images of Jesus's life story, from the Annunciation and Nativity to the Crucifixion and Ascension. She also traditionally appears with Jesus at the Final Judgment. Patrons of all such works, whether individuals or groups, chose their content carefully, reflecting their understanding of Mary's role in the world. Some images were even believed to have spiritual powers, to cry or bleed. Some were believed to honor Mary so much that when they were carried in procession or prayed before, Mary granted special favors or protection. Bolognese confraternities processed the *Madonna di San Luca* from her rural home through Bologna's streets during droughts or floods; when plague struck in 1438, 1444, 1449, 1459, and 1576, she was set up in the church of San Petronio. The Florentine *Madonna dell'Impruneta* was processed from its shrine through Florence's streets by leading clergy no fewer than 71 times from 1354 to 1540. War, famine, plague, flood, and other serious disasters prompted the city to seek her aid.

Renaissance-era Italy inherited a traditional treasury of Marian life stories, hymns, and prayers, and writers added hundreds more. Some such stories were associated with shrines commemorating Mary's appearance or with a rare relic. At

Loreto, a building was believed to be her house in Nazareth miraculously relocated. Pope Sixtus IV (r. 1471–1484) composed a special prayer to Mary as Our Lady of Loreto: “Hail most holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven, Gate of Paradise, Mistress of the Earth, you are virgin most pure, you conceived Jesus without sin, free me from every evil and pray for my sins. Amen” (Rubin, 159). Sixtus declared the prayer worth 11,000 years’ indulgence, or time off from purgatory, when said by pilgrims at the site, a typical inducement to visitors. Other prayers and hymns stemmed from confraternities, especially those dedicated to singing *laude* to Mary on a regular basis. Fully one-third of Venetian confraternities, or *scuole*, were dedicated to her. Confraternities known as Marian Congregations grew from the efforts of a young Jesuit student at Rome in 1563. Devotees joined these congregations, which were usually based in Jesuit colleges, by consecrating themselves to Mary and accepting the statement of faith adopted at the Council of Trent, balancing devotion to Mary with their worship of God. Members attended Mass daily, confessed weekly, and took Communion at least once a month; they embraced an ascetic lifestyle with fasting and much prayer; and they were committed to helping the poor, sick, and missionaries. By honoring Jesus’s mother, they understood that they honored Jesus himself.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; *Prints:* Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Sculpture;* *Economics and Work:* Book Printing and Sales; *Housing and Community:* Plague; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Church Festivals and Processions; *Songs and Singing,* Popular; *Religion and Beliefs:* Christian Art in the Home; Confraternities; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Memorials *Ex Voto*; Pilgrims and Shrines; Preachers and Preaching; Saints and Their Cults

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MEMORIALS *EX VOTO*

Catholics recognized that saints played a vital role in daily life. Those who were believed to be at rest with God in heaven remained part of the City of God, and served as advocates for the living before the Lord's throne. Human prayers for divine help were addressed to saints, who in return were sometimes promised tokens of appreciation from small paintings to entire churches. When the saint's favor with God was manifested by the occurrence of the requested aid or miracle, the thankful recipient made good his or her vow, usually in a public place associated with the saint. Even when a vow was not made, thankful recipients of supposed divine intervention thanked the saint and testified to his or her faithfulness with tokens. Over time, Renaissance-era churches, chapels, and shrines came to display hundreds of such tokens from vows (*ex voto*).

When powerful individuals or whole communities prayed for and received miraculous aid, the resulting memorial could be spectacular. Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella prayed for a grandchild, prayers finally answered in 1502. In thanksgiving they had architect Donato Bramante build the small, circular Tempietto (chapel) in the cloister of Rome's church of San Pietro in Montorio. Duke Francesco II Gonzaga of Mantua won the close-run victory over the French at Fornovo in 1495 and had the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria in Mantua erected over the house of dispossessed Jew Daniele Norsa. Inside, Mantegna's famous Madonna della Vittoria, featuring Francesco himself at the lower left, reinforced the church's significance. For the next century it was the goal of a ducal procession each July 2. Plague survivors sometimes commemorated their good fortune by building a chapel or church. Under the Torre del Mangia, Siena's civic hall's tower, is tucked away just such a chapel, promised in 1348 and begun in 1352. Late Renaissance Venice adorned its waterways with two plague churches, Palladio's Redentore (Redeemer; 1577–1592) and Longhena's Santa Maria della Salute (Saint Mary of Health; begun 1631). Other plague memorials, such as plaques or crosses, were far simpler and more characteristic of the seventeenth century than earlier.

One could fulfill a vow or give thanks by making a pilgrimage, paying to have Masses said, making donations to charities, or praying. But the private nature of such actions denied the saint the publicity afforded by testimonies at a shrine or even an altarpiece dedicated to him or her. Leaving a silver eye at a sanctuary such as Brescia's Santa Maria dei Miracoli, at which 586 were counted in 1554, left a greater impression than saying a few prayers. Visiting such a memorial, one might see crutches, canes, or bandages no longer needed by the healed; scores of candles of varying sizes burning in commemoration, as did lamps hanging from special rods; small painted figurines of wax or terra-cotta representing a child saved from

harm or born without incident; models of healed body parts in wax, clay, or tin; locks of hair or pieces of clothing or coins set carefully within the display. More organized was the reliquary chapel in the Florentine church of Santissima Annunziata with its miracle-working painting—completed by an angel—of the *Annunciation* by the Angel Gabriel to Mary. Here in the fifteenth century hundreds of life-size wax statues, painted and fully dressed, stood about as witnesses to the sacred power of the place. Here in 1625 Ferdinando Mancini counted over 3,600 tokens of all types. Renaissance-era Italian churches claimed hundreds of so-called miraculous images, usually featuring the Madonna and Child, and many of these gained a cult following when miraculous interventions by the saint portrayed were publicized. Some of these were old works long hidden away but suddenly discovered, cleaned up, and paraded about during an epidemic or famine. Many shrines were dedicated as meaningfully to the image as to the saint portrayed.

Paintings could also be *ex votos*. As a result of a vow, the wealthy or corporate groups such as confraternities purchased large images of saints or groups of saints, displaying them in chapels or as altarpieces. Poorer folk could also buy and display small panel paintings, often featuring the miracle being thanked for and even a “portrait” of the purchaser, kneeling and with hands folded in prayer. For the poor, such an image is likely the only portrait they would ever have made. These panels never replaced the other tokens one found, but they grew in popularity during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. At Lonigo, near Verona, the Sanctuary of the Madonna of the Miracles retains a collection of some 353 panels, each 22 × 32 centimeters in size, many appearing to date from the Renaissance era.

Saint Sebastian

His young, almost nude body pierced by arrows appears in hundreds of late medieval and Renaissance paintings and a few sculptures. The third-century soldier survived the executioners’ arrows but eventually died a martyr. As early as the seventh century, the association of plague with heavenly arrows made Sebastian the quintessential plague saint. Only Mary was deemed more powerful at convincing God not to destroy their devotees. He appears alone or with other saints, often around the Madonna, his nude form, some say, a favorite subject for painters. His aid was also invoked in numerous prayers and hymns.

In large cities and at popular shrines shops sold many types of *ex votos* both for placement in the nearby church or as souvenirs. Printed images with testimony or prayers lacked the personal touch but were inexpensive, though hand-made images

on wood, tin, paper, or linen could be personalized. Some shrines also published small books or pamphlets that recounted many of their miracles, such as the *History of the Glorious Images of the Madonna of Lonigo* (1605). Although a religious community of some sort oversaw every church and shrine, and to some degree benefited from pilgrims, the experience ending with the *ex voto* was thoroughly personal. The individual prayed, had her request answered by God Himself, and gave thanks outside of any role played by the institutional Church.

See also: Arts: Art, Sacred; Portraits; Sculpture; *Housing and Community*: Plague; *Religion and Beliefs*: Chapels; Churches; Mary, Cult of; Pilgrims and Shrines; Saints and Their Cults

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MONKS AND MONASTERIES

The Christian institution of monasticism has its roots in the deserts of third-century Egypt and the hills of southern Italy three centuries later. Early Desert Fathers and Mothers pioneered both solo and communal living apart from the distractions of social life in the later Classical Mediterranean. A sixth-century Italian monk named Benedict has long been credited with founding the way of life practiced by men and women who belong to the Order of St. Benedict. Following precedent—and the *Rule* of St. Benedict—they lived celibate lives dedicated to prayer and labor, being oath-bound to own nothing individually, refrain from sexual activity, and obey the abbot or abbess (father or mother) who leads the community. Their world was the monastery, symbolized by the closed-in cloister around which the community's buildings were placed. Hundreds of Benedictine monasteries dotted the medieval European countryside, serving vital societal needs from about 600 to 1300. Western European monasticism came to be identified with the Benedictine Order. Monks helped spread and preserve Christianity, maintain a level of Latin literacy and education both secular and religious, copy books by hand, heal and feed the poor, provide lodging to travelers, among many other services. By the Renaissance era many monasteries had come and gone, and stiff competition from

the mendicant orders of St. Francis and St Dominic drained off both supporters' contributions and pious young men who might have joined the cloistered life. Universities and urban schools replaced much of the need for monastic education, and civic hospitals and confraternities the need for monastic charity. Of course, printing superseded manuscript production, at least by the mid-sixteenth century. For men at least, the cloister seemed an antiquated lifestyle, being replaced by engagement with the world.

Yet life in the cloister continued at the deliberate pace set in the sixth century. Whether rural or urban, monks gathered in the church choir before dawn for the prayer service known as Matins, which was followed by Mass and seven more services through the day: Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and, just before retiring, Compline. They offered prayers for themselves, their dead in purgatory, their benefactors, and state. They monophonically chanted (Gregorian chant) the Psalms and other prayers and heard Scripture read to them. They met in the refectory for largely vegetarian meals and dined silently while a reader shared an uplifting book. They also met in their chapter house daily for prayer, news, and instruction. Rural monks gave over a part of each day to farm labor, though the acquisition over the centuries of villages and other properties populated with peasants meant that monks' "labor" was often otherwise directed.

As gifts dropped off, monasteries shifted to making and selling commercial goods. Agricultural products, such as wines and cheeses, distilled wines or liquors, and medicinal herbs from their gardens found ready markets. Some houses produced and sold stained glass to order, small art works, and even ground pigments of use to painters. Skilled artists created high-end manuscripts, and even after the advent of printing they inserted miniatures into printed works.

The Black Death around 1350 struck a heavy blow to monasticism. First, it killed many monks who lived closely together and remained in their monasteries. The brother of poet Francesco Petrarch was the only one of his Carthusian (semi-hermit) community to survive. Then, recruiting qualified new members was hampered for several reasons. Families wanted their surviving sons to have families and ensure the continuation of the bloodline. Young men drawn to the religious life often chose mendicant orders because so many had acted courageously in meeting the needs of victims. And many less than qualified men were recruited and fast-tracked into the life, a problem shared by mendicants and bishops needing to staff parishes. Gifts to monasteries shrank and the general quality of administration, discipline, and scholarship dropped. Though the populations of monastic houses shrank, dedicated men still joined. Some valued the regular life, its peace, and predictability; others appreciated the intellectual life pursued by some houses, especially those with great libraries. University-educated brothers returned as promising theologians and even classically trained humanists. Before patrons'

villas replaced them, monasteries hosted many circles of early Italian humanists and scholars. Even in the later sixteenth century Brescia had 18 monasteries, Florence 15 (with 732 monks in 1561; though 51 nunneries), and the huge Diocese of Milan 110 (and 2,000 churches).

Medieval monasteries had always played roles in Church reform, and by the 1420s the house of Santa Giustina in Padua led the way to reforming Italian monastic life. By the 1370s it had shriveled up to three residents. Under inspired leadership, it spawned a group of Benedictine Observants—conservative reformers who vowed to observe the *Rule* faithfully. These men planted the seeds of reform and strict living in monasteries across northern and central Italy. Florence's venerable Badia (Abbey) had three residents in 1392, but under new management recruited 82 members between 1419 and 1439. Similar results were achieved elsewhere, as life in over 60 Italian houses was revitalized by 1520. After 1504 this new branch of the Benedictine tree was known as the Cassinese Congregation, for St. Benedict's home monastery at Monte Cassino.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; Music at Church; *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; *Fashion and Appearance:* Religious Habits and Vestments; *Food and Drink:* Feasting and Fasting; Wines; *Housing and Community:* Plague; Poor, Aid to; Villages and Village Life; *Religion and Beliefs:* Churches; Friars; Nuns and Nunneries; *Science and Technology:* Alchemy; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Libraries; Pharmacopeias and Materia Medica

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NUNS AND NUNNERIES

Women who chose to devote themselves to lives of penitence and devotion outside of marriage may be referred to as female religious, the feminine equivalent of male

monks and friars. There were several types of women religious. Some chose the solitary life of the anchoress or female hermit. Many lived informally with like-minded women in semi-religious communities. Such groups were usually composed of older single or widowed women with no other social obligations, and they might be dedicated to various combinations of prayer, charitable service, and work to support their communal life. Since Church and civic authorities distrusted their lack of imposed discipline and formal organization, they often attempted to blend these communities with formal and officially recognized women's religious communities. These fell into two large categories: female monks (*monache*) residing in female monasteries, or nunneries, and usually following the Rule of St. Benedict under an abbess; and members of mendicant "second orders" for women. The mendicant orders included male Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians, Servites, and Carmelites; women who wished to live according to their ideals joined female convents that lived according to a women's version of their respective rules under the direction of a prioress. For this entry, "nuns" and "nunnery" refer to any formal women religious and their communities. They were expected to live lives closed off—cloistered—from their friends, families, and the rest of the world. Joining was a lifelong commitment.

Lifestyles and living conditions were anything but uniform among the communities of Renaissance-era Italy. Large, wealthy urban houses in Venice, Rome, and Florence comfortably housed scores of aristocratic women; while small, self-sufficient rural communities of a dozen tended their own gardens and looms; and small mendicant convents staffed hospitals, orphanages, and homes for "converted" prostitutes. A large urban nunnery featured a substantial church, open to the public; single rooms and dormitories for residents; a library; workshops; a *parlatorio* (parlor); gardens, a well, kitchens, food storage, and a refectory (dining hall); a chapter house for meetings; toilets; an infirmary and cemetery; residential space for boarders and students; and, of course, a high wall. Both private and communal spaces might be decorated with appropriate frescoes or panel paintings, gifts of family members or patrons.

The number of women living in nunneries increased dramatically across the Renaissance era, despite the steep drop and slow rebound in population after the Black Death. Florence hosted 16 nunneries in 1368, 30 in 1470, and 51 in 1600. Even so, average numbers of residents doubled between 1500 and the 1570s. In 1427 Florence's 906 nuns accounted for about 2% of its adult female population, but in 1552 the figure had soared to 13%, or 3,419 souls. By comparison, in 1564 larger Venice had 30 nunneries with 2,107 residents. Sixteenth-century Lombard cities had cloistered populations of 3 to 7% of their women, and tiny Pescia (population 6,000) had three nunneries housing 200 nuns—3%—and four applicants waiting for each vacancy. All of this growth was hardly due to spiritual awakening. Across northern and central Italy families recovered from ravages of plague and

sought to concentrate their wealth in a few families' hands. Fewer young men were set up for marriage, which meant girls' dowries rose in value as women's families sought one of the shrinking number of advantageous unions. Families with several girls might marry off only one, with the remainder dedicated to a nunnery. Perhaps half of Venice's female aristocrats lived cloistered lives by 1550.

Access to outsiders was strictly limited, though deliverymen, spiritual advisers and priests, painters and carpenters, and teachers visited regularly. Only a nunnery's leader was to meet with outsiders, though the house's *parlatorio* contained a grille through which a nun and her family might converse. Venice was infamous for its lax application of regulations, local recognition that its institutions were more sororities than Houses of God.

Many girls entered nunneries as early as seven for an education and insulation from the world. At about age 13 girls remained or entered with the intention of becoming a nun. Within two or three years the girls decided whether to stay and the community voted whether to "clothe" her. If so, in Venice her white silk dress, jewels, and pearls were ceremonially replaced with a woolen habit, leather belt and sandals, and a veil to cover her cut hair. During her next year as a novice she lived apart from the nuns and was tutored. Deciding to stay, a second vote preceded her formal vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and her family's payment of a dowry, perhaps one-third the going rate for marriage. Choir nuns came from well-off families and had their own rooms, spending much of the day reading, practicing music, or creating embroideries for sale. *Converse* were nuns of lower-class origins and status within the community, and were tasked with cleaning, food preparation, and laundry. For both, regular cycles of sung prayer structured each day, with the nuns gathering behind a screen in the house's church. Their prayers, as well as their lifetime dedications as nuns, were considered by all to be pleasing to God, and civic health and success depended in part on the sanctity of convents and monasteries. In Venice, joining a nunnery was considered a patriotic act. When inhabitants caused scandal by their—especially sexual—misbehavior, the city as well as the house was seen to suffer. Accusations of fornication, lesbianism, drunkenness, possession of secular wardrobes, and lax discipline led civic governments to oversee nunneries. Venice's first law forbidding sex in nunneries was passed during the Black Death, in 1349; and the city only required strict cloistering from 1519. Two years later it introduced the Supervisors of the Monasteries to oversee all religious houses. The government of Florence set up its Office of Convent Guardians in 1421. But nunneries also needed to be protected and sometimes defended. Across Italy they were targets of harassment, unlawful entry, assault, and abduction by local men, sometimes relatives or residents. Bandits and soldiers targeted unprotected rural nunneries, and even rich Roman houses were violated during the city's sack in 1527.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; Art Patronage; Music at Church; Prints: Woodcuts, Engraving, and Etchings; Women and the Arts; Women Poets and Their Poetry; *Economics and Work:* Clothmaking; Credit and Loans; Putting-Out System; Women in the Labor Force; *Family and Gender:* Childhood; Dowries; Education of Children; Families, Noble and Patrician; Old Age; Widows; *Fashion and Appearance:* Religious Habits and Vestments; Social Status and Clothing; *Housing and Community:* Hospitals and Orphanages; Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; *Politics and Warfare:* War and Civilians; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Reading; *Religion and Beliefs:* Churches; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Friars; Mary, Cult of; Monks and Monasteries; Women Mystics

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PILGRIMS AND SHRINES

A pilgrimage is a journey from one's home to a distant place of holiness, generally a religious shrine displaying relics or other sacred objects. The destination is not really geographical but spiritual, and the journey itself is meant to be as important as the time spent at the goal. Renaissance-era Italians undertook pilgrimages for numerous reasons. These included penance assigned by a confessor for one's sins, to thank a saint for successful intercession and a miraculous outcome, to seek aid

from such a holy intercessor, to honor the saint or saints present or represented there, and to receive indulgences that were believed to reduce one's time in purgatory. People also traveled out of a sense of adventure or curiosity, or to escape responsibilities at home. Whether one spent a few days on the journey or months traveling to and from Jerusalem, the road was tiring and fraught with dangers. Bad weather, disease, accidents, exhaustion, thieves, pirates, the violent, and shipwreck could end one's pilgrimage or one's life. Yet the spiritual benefits to be accrued outweighed the threats.

The proper pilgrim prepared spiritually by attending Masses and confessing his sins, and socially by seeing to his last will and ensuring that his family or other dependents were cared for. He needed cash enough for the length of the pilgrimage and sturdy clothing and shoes. He might travel by foot, but if a man of means by horseback or donkey. Traveling alone was both risky and boring, so he might seek out companions before leaving or along the way. While some women took to the road alone, there was greater safety in numbers.

Jerusalem, with its ties to Jesus's life, was the great goal of the pilgrim. Compostela in northern Spain—home of the body of the biblical St. James—came a close second. Before the Turks conquered it in 1453, there were many shrines in Constantinople to visit. In Italy, Rome held pride of place as a pilgrim's destination from at least the third century. Not only were Saints Peter and Paul buried there, but by the Renaissance era the popes had collected mountains of relics and sacred artifacts. Many of these were scattered across the city in large basilica churches such as Santa Maria Maggiore and San Lorenzo. Making ritual visits to these shrines earned one indulgences, promised by popes. From 1300 popes declared jubilee years for pilgrims to Rome, at first every 50 years and then every 25. During these, indulgences were increased, drawing tens of thousands of hopeful Catholics from across Europe who followed the itineraries laid out in manuscript or printed booklets. During one jubilee year St. Peter's alone distributed 354,400 Eucharistic hosts during Masses and licensed 1,700 preachers.

Shrines of all sorts dotted the Italian countryside and its cities. The tombs of near-contemporary saints such as Francis and Clare of Assisi, Dominic in Bologna, Anthony in Padua, Peter Martyr in Milan, and Nicholas of Tolentino were sites of reported miracles that were advertised by friars of their respective mendicant orders. During epidemics, churches with relics of St. Sebastian, or that in Venice with the body of St. Roche (after 1485), both protectors against plague, saw many fearful and thankful visitors. The Virgin Mary, of course, remained extremely popular. In the province of Brescia alone, a list of shrines from around 1550 included 115 sites. The cathedral in Prato held and displayed her belt, while her very house was said to have been miraculously relocated to Loreto in Italy. The latter was reproduced in numerous "copies" whose structural measurements mimicked the

original and were thus believed to embody the same sacred nature as the original. At Loreto the serious pilgrim took part in no fewer than 22 prescribed ritual acts, from attending Mass to making an offering and giving alms to the poor. Given that Mary was believed to have been taken bodily into heaven, her relics were few. Mary instead made miraculous appearances, as at Tirano in the Alto Adige in 1492. She also favored devotees by performing miracles through images of her, especially in the form of the Madonna and Child. Some were quite old and fortuitously discovered in odd places; some wept, bled, and even came to life. Some, such as the painting at Impruneta near Florence, were carried in procession through a city when danger threatened or struck. On holy days dedicated to Mary the flow went the other way as citizens paraded out to the powerful shrine.

Residents of more famous destinations supplied shelter, food, souvenirs such as lead badges, wax for gifts to the shrine, candles to be lit before it, rosaries, *ex voto* carvings or paintings, and printed prayers, miracle stories, or lives of the saint. Shrines were administered by monks, friars, or confraternities, all of whom benefited from their popularity. Some popped up along routes between major sites and both catered to travelers' needs and thanked them for their generosity. The ancient Via Francigena served pilgrims as a highway to Rome from the Low Countries and points south, winding through Pavia, Piacenza, Parma, Lucca, Siena, and Viterbo. Venice was a major portal to the Holy Land and featured many shrines that had been well stocked by the city's 1204 ravaging of Constantinople and its aftermath. Pilgrims gathered for weeks before the scheduled galley departures for Jaffa. The wealthy spent lavishly on supplies, alms, and luxury items that beckoned from the city's shops. After about 1500 the line between truly pious pilgrims and tourists seeking the unusual became ever fainter.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; *Family and Gender:* Health and Illness; Last Wills and Testaments; *Food and Drink:* Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community:* Plague; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Calendars: Sacred and Profane; Church Festivals and Processions; *Religion and Beliefs:* Chapels; Churches; Confraternities; Crucifix; Friars; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Mary, Cult of; Memorials *Ex Voto*; Preachers and Preaching; Saints and Their Cults

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PREACHERS AND PREACHING

From the time of Jesus Himself, Christianity has been spread and strengthened by those who orally proclaimed, or preached, His message. Generally this was by a single man speaking before an audience gathered to hear him. The venue was often a church, but a *piazza*, field, graveyard, or marketplace could do nearly as well. By the Renaissance era preaching accompanied major Masses, special events, funerals, Church seasons such as Advent and Lent, and feast days including Christmas and Easter. Groups such as monks and nuns, confraternities, guilds, city councils, rulers and their courts, and even the pope and cardinals sat through specially prepared sermons by their spiritual advisers or chaplains or visiting clergy. Well-known preachers could draw an audience almost anywhere and at any time.

Any clergyman could be expected to deliver an appropriate exposition on the day's scriptural readings, and perhaps to inspire, chastise, or warn a congregation as needed; though in any age few could really rise to the challenge. In the early 1200s the Franciscan and Dominican friars were founded specifically to spread and strengthen Christianity, which in large part meant effectively preaching. Good preaching, however, required not only talent but also training and education, which friars found in their convents and as communities attached to universities. Dominicans, officially known as the Order of Preachers, underwent intensive intellectual preparation in theology, and became known for excellent teaching as well. Franciscans were also learned, but because of the reputation of their beloved founder St. Francis of Assisi and their own clear embrace of poverty, as preachers they tended more toward the affective than the intellectual. Both groups, however, specialized in speaking the people's language. They validated the urban and commercial world of their day, and used it as a bottomless source for their rhetoric.

Saints became lawyers before the Judge in heaven; and grace was a sort of profit that strengthened one when reinvested by performing good works. Effective preachers used current events, local traditions and history, and ongoing controversies to draw their listeners in and to make their spiritual messages more relevant. Storytelling, too, was a tool often used, as Jesus had spoken in parables, to make

accessible that which was theologically difficult. Grotesque descriptions, jokes, quotes from Dante, both the familiar and the seemingly out of place, played important rhetorical roles. According to the ancient maxim, the message had to be both educational and entertaining. Indeed, outside a church the preacher had potentially many competitors, from charlatans to jugglers and street vendors. Not all preachers, however, either practiced or appreciated these folksy approaches, and some criticized their less formal or serious colleagues. Ultimately, the preacher's role was to make his listeners uncomfortable—with their sins, their luxuries, their inattention to the poor—and lead them to the refuge of the Church and her sacraments.

Preachers were formally taught that when explaining scriptural texts formal steps were to be followed. First the text was read; then the preacher formally greeted his listeners; he then prayed for God's help in making things clear; he introduced the passage's main themes and then broke it down to discuss their meanings; finally, in the *conclusio*, he discussed how the passage could be applied to listeners' lives. However packaged, the best sermons contained one or two oft-repeated and easy-to-remember messages. These could be about Church teaching or the need for obedience, sacraments and the spiritual value of penance, or even the need for proper etiquette while in church. In some cases preachers explained and expanded on biblical stories, making Scripture relevant for the sixteenth century. This was a special concern as Protestantism made inroads among Italian urban populations.

Friars' home churches, such as Florence's Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce, and the Frari in Venice, were large and usually had the pulpit located halfway

Description of a Sermon (1399)

In the following excerpt, Florentine notary Lapo Mazzei tells his friend, merchant Francesco Datini, about a sermon preached by Dominican Observant Fra Giovanni Dominici in 1399: "I was in the cathedral to listen to a friar of the poor life of St. Dominic, said to be like those from Fiesole. I tell you that I have never heard such a sermon, nor such preaching. It really looks as though the friends of God are on the rise again, to reform the clerics and laity. And he is supposed to preach here at Lent. . . you'll think you're hearing a disciple of St. Francis reborn. All of us either wept or stood stupefied at the clear truth he showed us."

Source: Lesnick, Daniel. "Civic Preaching in the Early Renaissance." In Timothy Verdon and John Henderson, eds. *Christianity and the Renaissance*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990, p. 215.

down the nave to center the preacher. During a special sermon, the preacher like the audience would stand, perhaps for two or more hours: better to suffer discomfort in this world than hellfire in the next! Dominican acoustics were better since they featured Gothic-style stone ceilings, while Franciscan churches generally featured open wooden truss work. Either way, the best preachers, like Dominicans Giovanni Dominici and Girolamo Savonarola and Franciscan Bernardino of Siena and his Sienese namesake Bernardino Ochino could hurl their voices to make the most of stone floors and walls. With the advent of print preachers needed not rely entirely on their voices. Before 1540 publishers sold sermons of famous dead clergy, such as the 11 sixteenth-century editions of the late Dominican Roberto Caracciolo. After 1540 some had collections of their own printed, including the three volumes (1584–1585) by Archbishop Angelo Castiglione of Milan. Readers included both other preachers and, increasingly, literate laypersons.

The Council of Trent (1545–1563) in its Fifth Session articulated new trends for Catholic preaching in the face of Protestantism's challenges. Sound preaching had to counter Protestant centrality of preaching in church services and personal Scripture reading. The council advocated two types of Scripture-centered sermons: one that explained the meanings of a given passage, and another focused on a religious theme that was then supported by a chain of Scriptural passages. Other post-Trent themes included Rome's glory and Catholic world expansion, Catholic differences from Protestantism and their superiority, and the evils of heresy. The council recognized that in preaching the Church directly entered the lives of people, who needed to be educated as well as inspired or shamed.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; *Prints:* Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Economics and Work:* Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender:* Death, Funerals, and Burial; *Fashion and Appearance:* Attire, Female; Attire, Male; Gems and Jewelry; Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drink:* Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community:* Jewish Communities; Neighborhood and Parish; Poor, Aid to; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Church Festivals and Processions; News; Reading; Street Entertainment; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Churches; Clergy; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Crucifix; Friars; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Protestantism; Sacraments; Saints and Their Cults

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PROPHECY AND APOCALYPTICISM

People have always lived in uncertain times and have sought solace in learning what the future holds. Whether the source of that information is science, witchcraft, or divine revelation, prognostication adds a sense of order to the world, and generally reflects broader cultural constructions. The Renaissance era placed great faith in the supernatural, especially those elements derived from the Christian tradition. While official Catholicism never had a specific place for prophets, the Church hierarchy accepted that certain mystics were blessed with divine inspiration and even knowledge of future events. It also taught that foreknowledge could come from Satan, and that only the Church could be a certain judge. Genuine prophecy was not a matter of random prediction, but of a coherent and pointed message provided to spur people to moral action. While a genuine prophet might accurately foretell a great storm or other natural disaster, it was always in the context of God's wrath, the price of sin, the need for repentance, or all three. Among the common folk, however, all manner of prophets were given credence, from wandering madmen to learned friars and even outspoken nuns. Prophetic voices, whether oral or written, received the greatest attention when times were unsettled by war, epidemic, famine, and other manmade and natural disasters. It is not surprising to find waves of prophecy accompanying the Black Death (1347–1350), Great Schism (1378–1417), French Invasion of Italy in 1494, Sack of Rome in 1527, and Turkish victories over Christian Constantinople (1453) or Cyprus (1571).

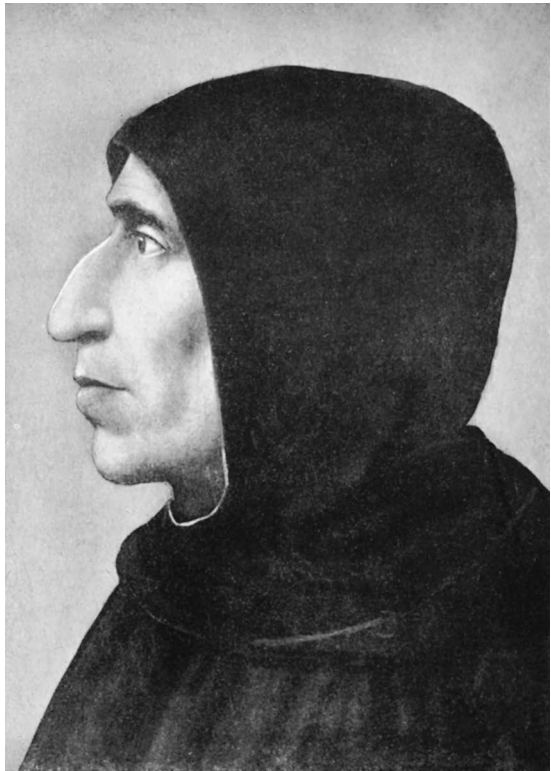
Prophets claiming divine inspiration generally presented messages requiring personal repentance and moral living, the imperative for Church reform, the necessity of political reform, and the need to defeat the Turks. Correct or supposedly correct predictions were believed to be seals placed on the messages, guarantees of their divine origins. Reform was necessary at that time because the end times were near, and society had to prepare the way. The Renaissance era was content not only to recycle biblical prophetic patterns, but those of medieval mystics

such as twelfth-century Joachim of Fiore, whose writings convinced many over centuries that they were living in the final age. Jesus warned that there would be “signs” of the impending end, and the biblical Apocalypse described the Horsemen of plague, famine, war, and death. Each generation read events around them in this light, and prophets were happy to hold the lamp high.

Preaching was the traditional venue for displaying one’s predictions and their meanings for humanity. From cathedral pulpits and country crossroads prophets laid out the deep meanings of the day’s curious or frightening events as well as astrological patterns, biblical passages, and previous prophecies now fulfilled. *Cantastorie*, literally story singers, rolled into towns large and small, and set up small stages and benches that audience members

could pay to sit on. They quickly produced and sold cheap handouts featuring stock images and generic verse texts with local relevance—a flood? earthquake? epidemic? battle nearby?—that accompanied their performance of prediction, interpretation, warning, and entertainment. Surviving handouts suggest that the verses were literally sung, and perhaps even with the audience in a kind of sing-along.

Formally written or published prophecies carried much further than the speaker’s voice. In the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries both genuine and spurious writings by mystics and prophets circulated widely even before printing. Prophecies and revelations attributed to fourteenth-century mystic St. Birgitta of Sweden were readily available in manuscript long before the first of a dozen printed editions appeared in 1478. Quotations from works such as hers appear in letters, while notaries tucked apparently unfulfilled prophecies into their registers and city



One of the most famous Renaissance-era friars was the Dominican preacher and reformer Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498), depicted here by his follower Fra Bartolomeo (1472–1517) in the year of his execution. Original is oil on panel. (Ann Ronan Pictures/Print Collector/Getty Images)

chroniclers noted both predictions and events that seemed to verify them. Extended prophetic passages in manuscript form constituted a veritable literary genre in both Latin and Italian.

Printing extended the reach of prophetic authors living and dead. People always needed to repent, the Church always required reforming, governments were always corrupt and oppressive, and there was always the Turk. Florentine presses produced editions of at least six new prophetic works by 1500, and 20 known Italian prophetic pamphlets appeared between 1480 and 1530. These tended to be of only a few pages, cheap, in vernacular verse, without place, publishers' names, or authors. One claimed its text was found in a Roman pyramid, and another that it had originally been inscribed in marble on a Roman monument. But these were not just for the undereducated or gullible: personal library inventories often list several works, many of which are otherwise unknown. More substantial were the sermons of the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola, who played the role of prophet and conscience of Florence in the 1490s. When his predictions of French invasion and Medici flight came true in 1494, his credibility soared. Playing all the notes of personal, social, and Church reform he shamed the rich and powerful of his New Jerusalem and got them to destroy their luxuries in literal bonfires of vanities. Papal excommunication followed his attacks on notorious Pope Alexander VI, and the Florentine Republic executed him in 1498 for disobedience and suspected heresy. His followers, including many women with supposed prophetic powers, turned support into a kind of cult and 23 editions of his printed sermons sold out across northern and central Italy. In 1502 a copy of *The New Apocalypse* by the fifteenth-century Franciscan friar and papal confessor Amadeus of Portugal was purportedly discovered in Rome and published. Its dialogue with the Angel Gabriel prophesied the appearance of the Angelic Pastor who would chastise and purify the Church and world. This set off speculations over who this would be: Charles V? Francis I? Luther? Of course the discoverer, Benedetto Salviati, knew it was himself.

Both oral and written prophecies of the more dramatic kind disappeared after about 1530, and prophetic speculation of any kind was discouraged by the Council of Trent and Inquisition.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; *Prints:* Woodcuts, Engraving, and Etching; *Economics and Work:* Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender:* Widows; *Fashion and Appearance:* Attire, Female; Cosmetics; Sumptuary Laws; *Food and Drinks:* Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community:* Plague; Poverty and the Poor; *Politics and Warfare:* War in Italy, 1494–1559; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Carnival; News; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Jews and Judaism; Magic; Preachers and Preaching; Protestantism; *Science and Technology:* Astrology

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PROTESTANTISM

In the premodern world one's religion was a vital and public part of his or her identity within a community. In Renaissance-era Italy, Roman Catholicism was acceptable, and other belief systems were suspect at best. Jews, Muslims, and Christians who dissented against the Church could not be full members of the society because society was quite thoroughly Catholic. Catholic sacraments, prayers, processions, festivals, confraternities, welfare institutions, and rules were religious elements that served to integrate society. Jews and Muslims were generally tolerated as foreign outsiders, but Christians who rejected the Church and its practices, usually considered heretics, had placed themselves outside of the community. Before the Protestant challenge to Catholicism that took off in the 1520s, several groups of dissenters were known to exist in Italy, such as the Waldensians, and these were persecuted by local authorities from time to time. From 1520, German, and later French and Swiss, ideas of "Reform" filtered down into Italy via merchants, exiles, and the printed page. Native Italian dissatisfaction with the Church—its beliefs, structure, dominance, rituals—found a voice, often labeled "Lutheran," whether it was really Calvinist, Anabaptist, anti-Trinitarian, or just generically anti-Church. Locally, debate over Church weaknesses and the merits of Reform spawned dissent. Within Italy poems, letters, books, and even sermons by dissident preachers spread non-Catholic ideas such as individual reliance on biblical authority alone, repudiation of saints and the ordained priesthood, and rejection of the Church as an intermediary between humans and God.

Dissidents, whether foreign or Italian, absented themselves from the sacraments, Catholic sermons, and celebrations of saints. They broke religious/civic laws by eating meat during Lent, "rebaptizing" adults who had been baptized as infants, or reading books that had been banned by Catholic authorities. Outspoken challengers freely taught or defended their ideas, orally or in print. They included

all sorts of people, from illiterate peasants who “had their own ideas” to renegade clergy and merchants, both foreign and domestic. Craftsmen discussed the new ideas with their employees, customers, suppliers, neighbors, fellow guildsmen, and family. The often-absent bishop of Modena was informed, “In the shops, on the street corners, in private homes . . . everyone disputes . . . matters of faith, free will, purgatory, the Eucharist, predestination, [and more . . .]” (Delph, 40). Some were little more than anticlerical critics who resented the power or corruption of the clergy; others had studied the northerners and developed clearly Protestant ideas of Reform; a few were truly radical, rejecting the Trinity or any religious authority. Several likeminded noblewomen and even cardinals sympathized with and protected certain dissenters as long as they could. Bishops and leaders of the Benedictine, Augustinian, and Dominican orders were suspect, and some even fled Italy.

Mainstream Catholic society generally reacted negatively, both individually and through the authorities. The less adventurous did not want to endanger their souls by being exposed to heresy, and the common person found meaning and a sense of community in their common religion, flawed as it might have been. Foreign sources of dissent tended to remain in cities, so such rural heresy as there was had local origins. Church authorities, especially bishops, had long been tasked with rounding up and silencing outspoken heretics, lest their criticisms and new ideas infect local flocks. Chief among the Church’s tools was the Inquisition. Educated friars were trained to detect and root out heresy, while Church courts and civic executioners dealt with those who refused to accept Church teaching and authority. With the development of printing the Church also practiced censorship, as did state governments throughout Europe. The products of printers were examined for heretical ideas, as were imported books. With the advent of Protestantism, a significant black market in both foreign and domestic heretical books developed, especially in Venice. The papacy and then the Council of Trent strengthened the Inquisition, developed an *Index*, or list, of *Forbidden Books* (1559), and authorized the new Society of Jesus (Jesuits; 1540) to combat the spread of Protestantism and similar dissent. The council (1545–1563) reformed many Church abuses and reaffirmed virtually all traditional Catholic teachings, clearly differentiating Catholicism from its several Christian rivals. Between 1547 and 1582, 80% of the Inquisition’s cases were against suspected *luterani* of various types, and half of these were northern Europeans.

The papacy, Inquisition, and local authorities struck hard and successfully against Protestantism between 1540 and the 1580s. Venice tried its first Anabaptist in 1551 and executed its last in 1569; its final execution of a *luterano* was in 1588. The Reformation as established in northern Germany, areas of France, the Netherlands, Switzerland, England, Scotland, and Scandinavia laid down no such roots in sixteenth-century Italy. One reason was the long love-hate relationship

common Italians had had with the Church, whose headquarters was, after all, in Italy. While criticism and even dissent had had a long history, these were cultural traditions rather than spiritually motivated responses as they were farther north. In addition, Protestantism was far from being a united movement, and the very diversity of doctrines and opinions dissuaded converts. It was also, for the most part, a foreign import and required alienation from the many social structures and traditions on which Italians relied. Furthermore, the Catholic Church developed a set of effective responses—Jesuit education, new confraternities, censorship, reform-oriented leadership—that defeated rival individuals and groups. Finally, the military and diplomatic hegemony of the Habsburgs, both Spanish and German and both staunchly Catholic, ensured that no Italian state outside the far northwest would be supportive of a Protestant presence.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Foreign Communities; *Politics and Warfare*: Crime and Punishments; *Religion and Beliefs*: Bible; Confraternities; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Friars; Inquisitions; Preachers and Preaching; Sacraments, Catholic

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Purgatory. See Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory

SACRAMENTALS

The Church's seven sacraments were specific rituals performed by Church representatives and that believers understood to channel divine grace to the participants.

Sacramentals were objects, ritual actions, or words used by people individually as part of their faith lives. Some practices involving these were ancient, such as crossing oneself, or the use of holy oil or holy water, while others, such as reliance on the Brown Scapular and praying the Rosary, were new to the Renaissance era. In the absence of a given sacramental's clearly pagan or heretical meanings or elements, the Church has tended to be either neutral or supportive in its use. During the Renaissance era the line between a sacramental and a magical object, such as a talisman or amulet, was often very thin. Both were understood to play roles in protecting, healing, and effecting other benefits to the user, and such benefits could be spiritual, physical, or both. From the Church's standpoint, most sacramentals emerged from historical usage rather than biblical example, which is one reason emerging Protestant denominations rejected their meaning and use. No list of sacramentals, which are still utilized by Catholics today, can be complete, and neither the Renaissance-era nor modern Church controls their number or use. Many, however, are formally blessed by the clergy, an action that is itself a sacramental and that confers sacramental quality on the object. In the daily lives of Catholics these items and actions were understood to be vital to maintaining their spiritual and physical health. In times of special threat, from battle to childbirth to plague, people relied on the rituals and objects as important connections between themselves and God.

Some sacramentals gained their reputations for efficacy from their use in the sacraments. Candles, holy water, holy oil, blessed salt, and verbal blessings accompanied baptisms; a blessing and the sign of the cross ended confession; holy oil anointed those being confirmed and those about to die, and the hands of the new priest. Holy oil has its roots in both Old and New Testaments—anointing kings, the sick, and the dead—and remained in the control of the Church for its sacraments. Blessed or holy water, however, was more readily available, eventually being poured into basins for ritual self-blessing upon entering a church. The bridge was probably the practice of the priest sprinkling blessed water on those at Mass on major feast days. It came to be an outward sign of blessing, and was applied to everything from weapons to plow horses. Candles were also blessed, often in large batches at Candlemas (February 2). Bee's wax or tallow candles and oil lamps burned in churches on the altar at Mass and before sacred images and relics. Candles burned beside coffins and in processions. Both came to appear before home images and public tabernacles containing an image. The smoky flame symbolized for many the prayers that were sent up to the saint or God from the sinners and supplicants below. Lighting a candle became synonymous with saying a prayer.

The rosary, a loop of carved beads, was popularized by mendicants. Associated with the Virgin Mary, for whom the rose was a well-known symbol, the prayers in the cycle were counted until it was completed. Rosaries were often blessed, and

became easily understood penances of prayer assigned at confession for minor sins. Another popular mendicant sacramental was the Carmelites' Brown Scapular, which was supposedly given by Mary to a mystic in 1251. Beginning as a narrow brown apron that fell to the ankles front and back from the shoulders, it was popularized in the sixteenth century as two small felt squares featuring images of Jesus and Mary. These were connected by a long ribbon and fell from each shoulder. If one wore it when dying, she would not go to hell, or so the promise went. This sort of "mechanical" operation went against Church teaching, but the sacramental's association with Mary, the Carmelites, and hell persuaded authorities to accept it. Certificates of indulgence, so famous as background to the Lutheran Reformation, may also be considered sacramentals, though sold under false pretenses. As stated in Latin, the Church's promise was that sincere confession would eliminate the penalty for sin. The clerical seller's oral promise was that purchase of the certificate was essentially a ticket to heaven, for oneself or another. The Council of Trent forbade this sale of the Church's promise, a practice condemned as simony.

The Rosary

Counting prayers by fingering beads is common to several cultures. Fourteenth-century Carthusian monks and then Dominican friars popularized the meditative ring of prayer "roses" among themselves and for laypeople (earliest rosary confraternity appeared in Cologne in 1475). Five groups of ten small beads (Hail Marys) are separated by five larger beads (Lord's Prayer). Each cycle of 5 and 50 is dedicated to an event in Jesus's or Mary's life, and five cycles (25 and 250 prayers) completes one set of Joyful, Sorrowful, or Glorious Mysteries. Rosary beads could be made of cheap glass or wood, semi-precious stones, or coral.

Pictures and statues of saints or Christ also played the role of sacramental, especially if blessed or in some way connected with miracles. Believers would pray before these, understanding them to be especially clear symbols of God or the saint. In some cases the object itself was believed to prompt divine or saintly action, as with many of the miraculous Marian images that were visited at shrines or processed through towns in times of great stress. The crucifix was perhaps the most powerful Christian symbol, appearing carved, cast, and painted, in churches, chapels, tabernacles, processions, and on people's table shrines and around their necks. After the Eucharistic Host the most powerful Christian object was probably the relic of Christ or a saint. These, too, could be sacramentals if found in private collections or attached to jewelry. More typically the badge a pilgrim brought

back from a shrine served as a sacramental, as did cheap brass, lead, or tin med-als that featured particular images of Jesus, Mary, or saints. Special to many was the Agnus Dei—Lamb of God—a wax disk stamped with the symbol of Jesus, a lamb with a banner or cross. Similarly, memorials *ex voto* that were left by thank-ful devotees at chapels and shrines served to link the spiritual with the physical in a very special way.

One last category of sacramental was the ritual action, such as a priest's bless-ing by gesturing a cross with his hand over a person or object, or a layman bless-ing himself with the sign of the cross—touching in succession the forehead, chest, left then right shoulder with two or more fingers. This last has long been used at Mass: whether people adopted what the priest did or vice versa is part of the story behind each sacramental.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; *Sculpture:* *Family and Gender:* Birth and Mid-wives; Childhood; Death, Funerals, and Burial; Fertility, Conception, and Contra-ception; *Fashion and Appearance:* Gems and Jewelry; *Housing and Community:* Plague; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Politics and Warfare:* Soldiers; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Christian Art in the Home; Crucifix; Demons, the Devil, and Exorcism; Friars; Magic; Mary, Cult of; Memorials *Ex Voto*; Pilgrims and Shrines; Sacraments, Catholic; Saints and Their Cults; *Science and Technol-ogy:* Astrology

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SACRAMENTS, CATHOLIC

The Catholic Church has long taught that during His lifetime Jesus established seven specific rituals, the purpose of which is to strengthen faith and aid human sal-vation. Sincere participation in these gains the believer some measure of grace, the spiritual fuel that strengthens one's faith. While God may provide grace to people for any reason or none, He guarantees it through the sacraments performed by His Church. The seven were formally listed and explained in 1215 at the Fourth Lateran Council and again for the benefit of the Orthodox representatives to the Council

of Florence in the 1430s. Protestants challenged the teaching—most reducing the number to two, baptism and the Eucharist—while they stripped sacraments' grace-bestowing role. The Catholic Council of Trent (1545–1563) reinforced the now-traditional teaching regarding the sacraments, emphasizing practices that honored the Eucharist.

Jesus Himself was baptized and commanded that all nations be baptized. Catholics are happy to baptize new adult converts, but children of Catholics have long been baptized as infants, shortly after birth. This places an indelible spiritual mark on the infant's soul and figuratively washes away the residual guilt for Adam's original sin with which every human—except the Virgin Mary and Jesus—comes into the world. A short exorcism is performed to keep Satan at bay. The child is formally named and anointed with blessed olive oil (chrism, hence christening), and godparents, standing in for the absent parents, promise to raise the child in the event she is orphaned. Since the typical new Christian had no say in the matter, around the age of 12 she participates in the Sacrament of Confirmation. As a rite of passage into adolescence, and as the name implies, by allowing the local bishop—and only a bishop—to anoint her forehead and sharing in prayer with others, she confirms what her godparents originally did on her behalf. Just as baptism began the flow of sacramental grace, so confirmation ensures it. In the case of an adult convert, baptism and confirmation coincide.

Marriage and the ordination of a priest, which are mutually exclusive in Catholicism, are sacraments that create a lifelong commitment to a vital duty in the Christian community. Marriage created a new family whose purpose was to bring children into the world and to bring them up as good Christians. Technically the pair conferred the sacrament on each other while the priest witnessed and blessed the proceedings. For a valid marriage the spouses had several levels of separation as relatives; so, for example, first cousins did not marry. Both parties had to be at least a minimum age, and both had to agree to the union without coercion: a father could not force his daughter to marry. Because marriage was sacred and blessed by the Church, divorce was not an option. Church law did, however, provide for annulment, which was granted when a marriage was declared by a Church court to be unconsummated or defective: for example the woman too young, the pair too closely related, or the priest defrocked.

A man underwent ordination when a bishop decided he was ready to begin serving as a priest. The public ritual included laying on of the bishop's hands and the purification of the new priests' hands with oil. The effect of ordination was to enable the priest to serve as a bridge between the Catholic community, or parish, and God. He had the ability to absolve a person from the penalty for her sin through confession, and to change bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood at Mass in the Eucharist: powers Jesus gave the Apostles and they passed down.

A fourth-century council decided these powers could never be taken away or lost, but the right to exercise them could, through the process known as defrocking. Disobedient, immoral, or criminal priests could thus lose the right to exercise their priestly powers, but not the ability. Trent was especially concerned that priests be well chosen and well supervised, to avoid scandal and that they might provide impeccable examples of Christian life.

By the Renaissance era, each Catholic was mandated to confess her sins and exhibit true contrition for them, and to receive the Eucharist at least once a year. Unlike the others, these sacraments were meant to be participated in frequently. In confession the parishioner knelt or sat privately with the priest (the confessional or box came after Trent) and reviewed all the sins she committed since her last confession. The force of the sacrament was to stir in the participant a true sorrow for sin and a real resolve not to repeat old offenses, with the help of God's grace. Usually the priest imposed a penance, or obligation, on the penitent, which could range from recitation of prayers to fasting or even undertaking a pilgrimage, depending on the severity of the sins. When completed, the mercy of Jesus was manifested in the removal of the penalty for the confessed sins.

Now the Catholic was ready to receive the Body of Christ in the Eucharist, which a priest confected during Mass. At the Last Supper Jesus instituted the ritual meal by declaring that the bread and wine He blessed, or consecrated, had become His body and blood. Since only the Apostles were present, only their priestly successors were deemed able to carry this out. Unlike Protestants, who developed a spectrum of beliefs, Catholics confirmed at Trent that the bread and wine used at Mass became the real and true body and blood of Jesus. This is a miraculous process known as transubstantiation: while the outward appearance does not change, the real substance of the materials does. Popular belief was that just viewing the host, or wafer of consecrated bread, and the chalice or cup conferred spiritual benefit; therefore many merely attended the Mass and did not take communion. Because the apparent bread was really the body of Jesus—the ultimate relic—it was often carried in processions and displayed to the public; its presence in a church made the place sacred; and Satanists sought to obtain it to desecrate it, or so people believed.

Last Rites or Last Anointing—Extreme Unction—combined a last confession and the Eucharist, along with prayers and a final application of holy oil to the head of a dying man or woman. A “good death” was one in which family surrounded the person and a priest performed these last rites. They were considered the final opportunity for grace in this life and served to shorten one's penalty in purgatory after death. To die without them was a terrifying thought, and priests went to extreme measures to see that those dying of plague, for example, were provided this final benefit.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Sacred; *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender*: Birth and Midwives; Childhood; Death, Funerals, and Burial; Divorce, Separation, and Annulment; Dowries; Last Wills and Testaments; Names, Personal and Family; *Housing and Community*: Neighborhood and Parish; Plague; Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare*: Crime and Punishments; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Church Festivals and Processions; *Religion and Beliefs*: Bible; Chapels; Churches; Clergy, Catholic; Confraternities; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Friars; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Pilgrims and Shrines; Preachers and Preaching; Protestantism; *Primary Document*: A Fifteenth-Century Venetian Merchant's Understanding of the Mass: *Zibaldone da Canal*, a Venetian Merchant's Manual (1422)

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SAINTS AND THEIR CULTS

In the Catholic Church a saint is a person who led an exemplary life by Christian standards and is with God in heaven. Such a person has found God's favor, and God is likely to listen to requests made by such a holy person. The saint is also aware of those on earth who remember, respect, and pray to him or her, asking for prayers asking God for help. Renaissance Italians understood the saint as a kind of holy advocate who stands before the all-powerful Lord and Judge. In the popular mind saints were often understood to have powers themselves, though the Church downplayed or even argued against such misunderstandings. Despite their lack of a physical presence, they were considered members of the Christian community who responded not only to requests but also to insults and gratitude. Because of the sense of their presence and their spiritual roles saints had a profound influence on all levels of Renaissance Italian culture. This influence was expressed in cults, or specialized beliefs and rituals, associated with specific saints.

Important early saints included Mary and her mother Anna, Joseph, John the Baptist, and the 12 apostles. The next generation was those who testified to their faith by martyrdom, including bishops and other Church leaders. Many of these

were in Italy, their executions and burials commemorated with local shrines or churches bearing their names. Their bones, teeth, and objects associated with them were relics that were treasured as spiritually powerful objects, the possession of which indicated devotion to the saint. Later generations of saints were usually men and women working for the Church as missionaries, monastics, preachers, mystics, and members of medieval religious orders, such as St. Francis of Assisi. The Renaissance era itself produced saints, such as Catherine of Siena, Archbishop Antoninus of Florence, and Ignatius of Loyola, who founded the Jesuit Order. Many saints, such as Mary and the Apostles, were venerated by the entire Church, while other more locally known leaders or martyrs were only locally recognized. Advertising through written *Lives* or reports of miracles made many local figures well known widely, and pilgrims and devotees spread the word about the powers of “their” saints. Lists, or canons, of recognized saints appeared, and eventually canonizations became the prerogative of popes alone. From the sixteenth century, after Protestant critics denied saintly advocacy or miracles, canonization was regularized and great care was taken in assigning the title saint.

From birth to death saints watched over and aided the Renaissance-era Christian in every aspect of life. At baptism a saint’s name was given the child, who was taught to respect and pray to him or her on a regular basis. The local church was dedicated to a saint (or Christ), and the neighborhood celebrated his or her feast day, usually believed to be the date of death. Entire cities were dedicated to one or more saints—Sts. Peter and Paul in Rome, Sts. John and Zenobius in Florence, Mary in Siena, St. Mark in Venice, St. George in Genoa, St. Januarius in Naples, and others—and their feast days involved participation by all residents. Every guild had its patron saint, such as St. Luke, who by tradition was an artist and was venerated by the painter’s guild. When Florence’s church of Orsanmichele was provided with external niches in the 1400s, several guilds had the honor of displaying statues of their patron saints. Confraternities, too, had their patron saints, whom members revered on their feast days. Saints also had particular areas of concern, often reflecting their lives or deaths. Joseph protected carpenters, Matthew accountants, Cecelia musicians, George soldiers, and Ann women in childbirth. The third-century martyr St. Sebastian and the contemporary plague victim St. Rocco were specialists in plague protection, while the Old Testament’s “St.” Job and St. Lazarus aided the devoted leper. Mary, Jesus’s mother, was the ultimate saint, one holy enough to bear God into the world and the person to whom Jesus was most likely to respond.

Saints were invoked, or called upon, through special prayers, in long lists or litanies that included their names, and in hymns and chants. In churches paintings, sculptures, and stained glass windows depicted saints, who were often recognizable by their symbols or attributes. A wealthy citizen might depict in an altarpiece

his own or family members' name-saints singly or silently flanking the Madonna and Child in what was called a "sacred conversation." They in turn might join the church's name-saint, and those of the city, his profession, and others whose relevance might escape modern art historians. Some works displayed dozens of recognizable saints crowded around Mary's throne, though this trend died out by the sixteenth century in favor of individual saints' "portraits." Such images appeared in family chapels as well as other chapels whose patrons were devoted to a particular saint.

Attributes of Saints

Medieval Christians developed a visual language of identification for images of saints that Renaissance artists and viewers continued to use. Clothing, objects, and even hair, landscape, and gestures spoke volumes. Early figures wore robes and carried symbols such as St. Peter's keys, or instruments of their martyrdom such as St. Paul's sword or St. Catherine's wheel. Thirteenth-century St. Dominic wore his Dominican Order's habit, his shaved head with a star over it; fellow Dominican St. Vincent Ferrer looked similar, but had a star on his chest. Bishops had their vestments, popes their tiaras, martyrs palm branches, and all the halo of holiness.

Often saint images were commissioned out of gratitude for perceived miracles or other interventions. If a vow to the saint was made during the danger, then such a token is an *ex voto* ("from a vow"). Even city authorities made such vows, and the results could range from a procession to a huge church. Far more often thanks were in the form of a small plaque or sculpture left near the saint's image. Some paintings of contemporary saints included the scenes of the miracles they performed while alive or after death, such as saving falling people or driving away demons. By such promotion the saint gained needy devotees. Churches, shrines, and religious orders associated with contemporary but little-known saints advertised their cults in *Lives* and printed pamphlets (after 1460) with devout pictures of the saint performing miracles. For such folks, canonization was the holy grail of recognition.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Sacred; *Family and Gender:* Names, Personal and Family; *Housing and Community:* Neighborhood and Parish; *Plaque; Recreation and Social Customs:* Church Festivals and Processions; *Religion and Beliefs:* Chapels; Christian Art in the Home; Churches; Confraternities; Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Mary, Cult of; Memorials *Ex Voto*; Pilgrims and Shrines; Sacraments; *Science and Technology:* Plague Treatises and Consilia

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WITCHES AND SORCERERS

The Renaissance witch—with her broomstick, her erotic lust for the devil, her demonic pacts signed in fire or blood, and her femaleness—was a cultural product. The Old Testament instructed “suffer not a witch to live,” but pagan Classical authors sprinkled witches and sorcerers across their pages. Medieval peasant beliefs identified liminal local characters, such as those with knowledge of healing herbs, as responsible for infant deaths, crop failures, and livestock diseases: the power to heal was also the power to destroy. Popular tales transmitted details of old women and even nuns and clergy consorting with demons, while theologians who identified heretical ideas with demonic influence came to treat witches and sorcerers as heretics. As early Christian writers had pointed out, pagan religion was simply the worship of demons, and supposed Christians worshipping demons was heresy.

Men and women with special, practical knowledge of natural processes, especially medicinal ones, had long served communities in Italy by the fourteenth century. Struck by the stubbornness of outlawed heretical groups of Waldensians and Cathars in northern Italy, however, both Church and civil authorities began active repression of “enemies of God.” In 1376 Nicolau Eymeric, a Catalan inquisitor, published a very influential book—*Directory of Inquisitors*, republished up to 1607—in which he explicitly equated any sort of magic with heresy only if it included any reliance on the cooperation of a demon. He recommended death for any who participated and remained unrepentant or committed the crime again. Florence executed Niccolò Consigli in 1384 for possessing books on demonic magic. In 1387–1388 religious heretics in Lombardy were arrested and tortured, and admitted to being part of a “synagogue” of God-hating devil worshippers. Further east, in Friuli, authorities rounded up Cathars, Waldensians, Jews, and “witches” who were accused of participating in pagan fertility rites, pagan being once again equated to demonic. Later fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century actions against witches were scattered and largely carried out by civil authorities in big cities such as Modena, Florence, and Milan.

Between 1430 and the 1460s descriptions appeared, or were solicited with judicial torture, of witches exchanging with demons their souls for secret powers, and of witches flying to sabbaths, or meetings with other witches and demons. The Franciscan friar San Bernardino of Siena—himself tried for heretical magic in 1426, the year the first witch was burned in Rome—famously preached brutal sermons against servants of the devil throughout central Italy, providing lurid details of inhuman activity. To him, the smoke of their burning bodies was like incense rising to God. Witches were further associated with demonic orgies, infanticide, cannibalism, desecration of the Eucharistic Host, and shape-shifting. Much of this and more was included in the *Malleus maleficarum* (*Hammer of Witches*, 1487) by the German Dominican friar and inquisitor Heinrich Krämer. His work was terribly influential, seeing 14 printed editions between 1487 and 1520. In the Leventina Valley in 1458 inquisitors and civil judges had 20 women burned for participating in supposed witches' sabbaths. Large-scale prosecutions swept the Diocese of Como in the Alpine foothills around 1485 (around 40 executed); 1513 (around 60 executed); and 1516 (around 100 executed). In the Veneto's Val Camonica in 1518 alone courts issued 62 death sentences—many in absentia—and so many more that in 1521 the Venetian rulers shut the process down. By then around 80 people had lost their lives.

The remainder of the sixteenth century saw Protestants replace witches as heretics of choice for the reinvigorated Roman Inquisition (from 1542). Inquisition records in Venice and Modena make no mention of witch executions, though the Counter-Reformation movement treated all sorts of magic as potentially heretical. In 1569 Sienese authorities burned to death five women for allegedly having made diabolical pacts and for killing 18 children to use their remains in vile ointments. In 1583, 100 women were accused of diabolical witchcraft and 10 were burned, even though they had repented. Rome burned its last witches in 1572; thereafter condemned witches were required to swear against their previous behavior, undergo public humiliation, and house arrest or prison. Two hundred residents of Trionfo near Genoa were accused by civic officials of diabolical witchcraft in 1587. Thirty-three were tried, and after intervention by Rome, 14 ended up in prison. By the 1590s the Roman Church was reining in and even prosecuting overly zealous pastors, such as the bishop of Bitonto, and had banned the use of the testimony of witches in condemning others. Official writers on witchcraft began to depict witches as victims of demonic delusions, such as the sabbaths and flying brooms. The culture's misogyny began to interpret certain women's positive response to devilish overtures as a weakness to be pitied rather than a willingness to participate in evil. This may help explain why Italy participated only peripherally in the later "witch-craze" that saw tens of thousands of women judicially murdered across Europe.

For the old widow who desperately needed her lost coin, the young woman who burned with desire for a particular man, and or the farmer whose animals were dying mysteriously, it probably mattered little whether help or harm came through the aid of spirits or just the wondrous skills of the man or woman who always seemed to know what to do. When new laws or a preacher's sermon warned them against those who were thought to consort with Satan, however, panic set in. When the Alpine valley community looked at itself, it saw the local herbalist, the healer, and the amulet-maker, and could easily imagine the devil behind any one of them. When accused, some were frightened or confused enough to confess, others did so because they were horribly tortured by the Church or civil authorities, and still others perhaps under the delusion that they indeed had a relationship with the devil.

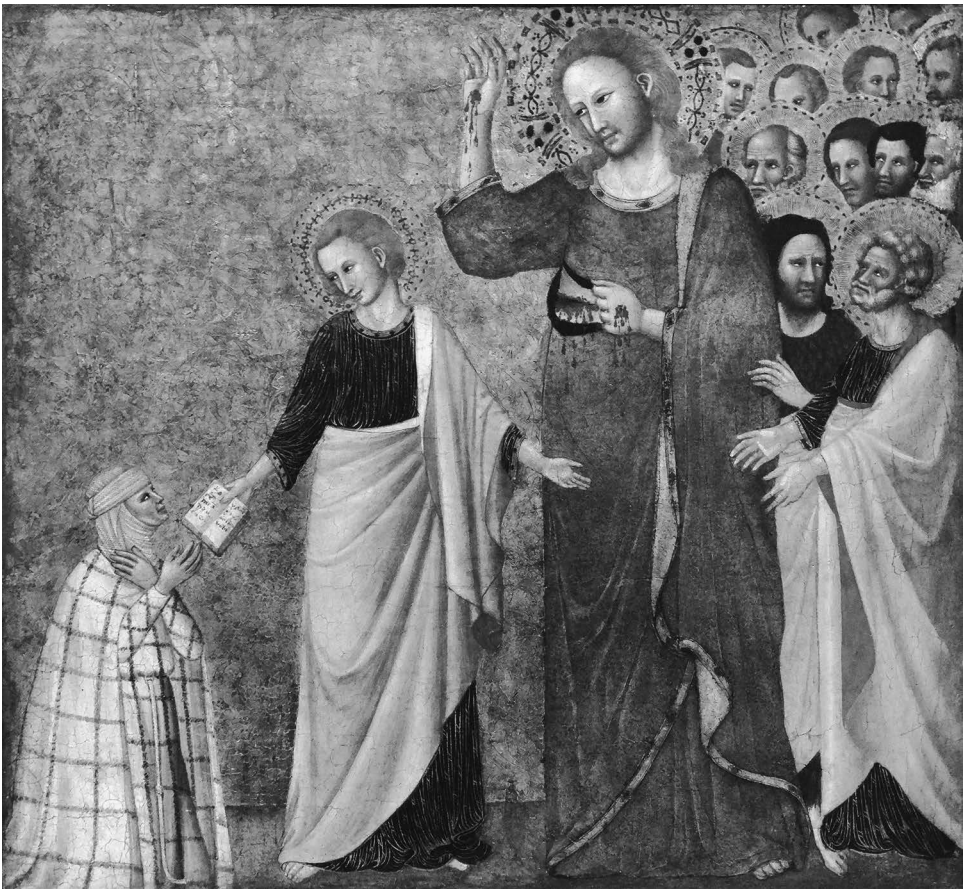
See also: *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; *Family and Gender:* Birth and Midwives; Fertility, Conception, and Contraception; Health and Illness; Infancy, Nursing, and Wet Nursing; Widows; *Food and Drink:* Hunger and Famine; *Housing and Community:* Infant Mortality and Foundling Homes; Villages and Village Life; *Politics and Warfare:* Crime and Punishments; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Executions; Madness; *Religion and Beliefs:* Council of Trent and Catholic Reform; Demons, the Devil, and Exorcisms; Friars; Magic; *Primary Document:* Testimony before the Inquisition against a Witch: Costanza's "Diabolical Works" as Recounted before the Inquisition in Modena (1518)

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WOMEN MYSTICS

By the later fourteenth century Christianity had produced a long list of women and men mystics who had been blessed with an especially intimate, vivid, and emotional experience of the presence of Christ, the Trinity, Mary, or other saints. In some ways the fourteenth century was the heyday of Christian mysticism, of Julian of Norwich, Henry Suso, Johannes Tauler, and Angela of Foligno. Lesser known were women such as the Tuscan Dominican prioress and miracle-worker Agnes of Montepulciano, the Augustinian prioress Clare of Montefalco, and Clare of Rimini of the Franciscan-related Poor Clares, all of whom died before 1350. The early Renaissance era continued to produce exceptional Christian women whose spiritual



Blessed Clare of Rimini (Chiara Agolanti, d. 1346) was a worldly young woman whose conversion transformed her into a leading Franciscan ascetic. Here she is mystically visited by St. John the Evangelist, who presents her a book, and Jesus, who presents the wounds from His passion. The panel by Francesco da Rimini (fl. 1320–1348) was painted with egg tempera. (Universal History Archive/UGC via Getty Images)

experiences were extraordinary enough to be recorded; several of them wrote or dictated divine messages to help guide a troubled world. While Renaissance-era male mystics were also notable, the women stood out from the usual silence of the convent or nunnery, providing uniquely feminine constructions of spirituality.

Five Italian women mystics stand in high relief across the Renaissance era for their experiences and holiness, so that they were canonized saints of the Catholic Church. Birgitta of Sweden was the noblewoman who founded the order of Brigittine nuns. Influenced by stories of St. Francis of Assisi, as a widow in 1349 she left her homeland for Rome, where she set up a hospice for Swedish pilgrims. Her visions and mystical dialogues began at age seven. Hundreds were recorded in her *Revelations*, which circulated widely in manuscript and was printed first in Rome in 1556. Pious laymen, such as the Tuscan notary Lapo Mazzei, read and reacted to her writings, mentioning them in letters. Some of hers were aimed at the kings of England and France to end their war and to popes to return to Rome from Avignon. Birgitta wrote of battles with the devil, discussions with saints, and her mystical marriage to Christ. She spent time in Naples trying to reform its notoriously immoral court, and traveled to Cyprus and the Holy Land. Her life story was recorded by two of her confessors, in part to aid her cause for sainthood.

A second and contemporary woman of the spirit and action was Catherine of Siena. Born the 24th of 25 children, Catherine entered a Dominican convent in Siena as a lay boarder at age 18. At 21 she underwent a mystical marriage in which Christ presented her with a ring with diamonds and pearls. Like Birgitta, from her mystical experiences of the Divine Catherine gained an often decidedly unfeminine voice in some 400 letters demanding reforms within the Dominican order, papal return to Rome, and peace among feuding Italian city-states. Her *Dialogue* was recorded over about a year (1377–1378) by male secretaries as she walked, knelt, or even levitated in rapture. Called to Rome by the pope in 1378, she carried on her inspired work as a social mystic until her untimely death in 1380 at age 33.

Fifteenth-century Catherine of Genoa was of noble birth and was espoused at 13 in what became an unhappy marriage. Socially very active with charity work, Catherine underwent her initial rapture at age 26. Shortly afterward, her husband became a Franciscan tertiary, and she dedicated herself to the local Ladies of Mercy, devoting herself to work in the hospital of Pammatone. She received repeated ecstasies or visions, which were recorded by her confessor—who also wrote her *Life*—in her *Treatise on Purgatory* and *Spiritual Dialogues*.

Sixteenth-century female mystics tended to be less engaged with the world, at least that is true of those who were canonized saints. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi was of an old Florentine family and at 17 entered the city's strict Carmelite convent of St. Mary of the Angels. Her first mystical experience was at age 12. Following an illness she began experiencing daily raptures, which she had no desire to discuss

with anyone but her confessor. Eventually her sisters were instructed to record these, which were delivered in ways described as theatrical, in cries, whispers, and mumblings as often as clear speech. Hers was the voice of Jesus, she claimed, but study of her utterings reveals heavy influences from Sts. Augustine and Catherine of Siena, and even Jesuit sermons to her convent community. Though canonized for her holiness and attributed miracles in 1669, her writings, the *Dialogues* and *Revelations*, were first published only in the twentieth century.

Caterina de'Ricci was Maria Maddalena's Florentine contemporary and similarly spent her adult life in a convent. Her ecstasies came weekly amid a life of extreme self-denial and even self-torture, undergone as part of her extraordinary devotion to Christ's Passion. She rose to run the Dominican convent in Prato and was canonized for her life of devotion and miracles.

Each of these female saints and mystics reflects the Church of her time—the prophetic voices of the era of the Schism, the dedication to lay service to the poor and needy in the following century, and the Catholic Reformation's concern for the spiritually intense cloistered nun. Even the facts that none of Catherine de'Ricci's revelations were recorded nor Maria Maddalena's revelations were published for over three centuries are a function of the Tridentine Church's closing off unauthorized female voices. Yet female mystics do share themes in their experiences that reflect their fundamental feminine drives: sex, marriage, motherhood, family. Mystics married Jesus, or held Him as an infant or even breastfed Him, with Mary's acquiescence, of course. They also conducted themselves as traditionally men did: debating the devil, calling for social and Church reform, and speaking truth to power.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Sacred; *Family and Gender*: Widows; Wives and Husbands; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Hospitals and Orphanages; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Women, Letters, and Letter Writing; *Religion and Beliefs*: Bible; Crucifix; Demons, the Devil, and Exorcisms; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Inquisitions; Nuns and Nunneries; Preachers and Preaching; Saints and Their Cults

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



INTRODUCTION

The time period we call the Italian Renaissance was noted for many things. These included the intellectual and cultural revival of Classical ideas and forms that we associate with humanism, realism and naturalism in painting and sculpture, new and positive attitudes toward the physical world (secularism), and the expansion of the European footprint in the world through the voyages, trade, and colonization of far-flung parts of the globe. Each of these phenomena had an effect on the technology of the day, and on what contemporaries would have called natural philosophy and natural history, what we label science. In the Classics they found validation of nature and fascination with natural philosophy and natural history. The era's discoveries opened the door to new possibilities and led to new searches. And among artists they found the means of faithfully illustrating their ideas and discoveries.

In general, what the Renaissance era saw was an advance in already-established fields, with the introduction of some real game-changers. For example, universities and medicine had medieval roots, and advances were essentially variations or improvements on what had already begun. Even with Copernicus's paradigm shift in positing a heliocentric universe, little really changed even in theory until the telescope began to provide evidence. Many technologies, such as naval architecture, remained largely static, too. Sail-driven roundships had been used on the Crusades, and rowed galleys were variations on Greco-Roman biremes and triremes. On the other hand, major innovations included the widespread availability of inexpensive paper, the printing press, the mechanical clock, and gunpowder weapons. Some inventions, such as mathematically based linear perspective, had subtler impacts.

Pioneered by the Florentine architect and engineer Filippo Brunelleschi in the 1420s, this new tool allowed artists to create images in which the components bore naturalistic relations to one another as seen by the human eye. Train tracks do not



Academies in Renaissance-era Italy were named for Plato's school in Athens, Greece, the Akademia, itself a grove of trees sacred to Athena. In this famous detail from the *School of Athens* fresco in the Vatican (1509–1511), Raphael (1483–1520) used the head of the venerable Leonardo da Vinci as his model for the elderly but powerful Greek philosopher. (Nicolay/Dreamstime.com)

really converge, but they *appear* to when we look down them. Artists applied this readily to two-dimensional paintings, drawings, prints, and bas-relief sculptures. Though based on a faulty understanding of the science of optics, perspective did work and allowed for far more useful—because visually accurate—depictions of both nature and the artificial. Had Brunelleschi not discovered and explained perspective, Leonardo da Vinci might well have. His very fertile mind combined it with other artistic tools, such as chiaroscuro, modeling through the use of shadow. He also employed atmospheric perspective—a technique based on the insight that far distant objects are less distinct than nearby ones because the atmosphere absorbs light—to produce amazingly detailed and immediately intelligible images. Perspective made his images of machines and natural objects “pop” when compared with those of earlier generations. Though he did not publish his notebooks, many others in various fields polished and published via the printing press their perspectively sophisticated images. Fields as diverse as botany and engineering

profited greatly from the ability to depict objects the way our eye perceives them. Gardeners and apothecaries could identify a plant from its newly realistic image; another engineer could design a complicated gearing system from a printed engraving, often prepared for the author by a practicing artist. Perspective, then, advanced technical illustration, which in turn helped publicize new ideas and creations and things newly discovered. This was true in the beautiful illustrations in Andrea Vesalius's *On the Fabric of the Human Body*, and in the scaled maps of cities such as Venice, Florence, and Rome. It was also true in the succession of sixteenth-century maps of the New World, on which cartographers struggled to display what was known and imply what was not.

There remained in effect an old bias in favor of the intellectual labor of "science"—literally knowledge—and the manual labor of technology. Imagining and explaining things, and finding fundamental principles (eventually natural laws)—science—outranked the physical things themselves—technology. It was a bias that would resurface and persist through the eighteenth century. During our period, however, the veil between the two became very thin indeed, and the distinction between scientist and technician was often minimal. In part, this was because natural philosophy and natural history had not become "science" yet. The method, the experiments, the systematic observations, and the mathematics lay off in the future. University professors in surgery did hands-on public dissections, in botany they tended the gardens, and in medical school they tended the sick on rounds. Among many, experience and empiricism were prized at least as much as book learning and theorizing. As Lisa Jardine has put it, "The worlds of the scholar, the technical engineer, and the merchant were in practice inseparable" (*Worldly Goods*, 360). It was as much an age of the bold amateur and dilettante in sixteenth-century Naples or Torino as it was in eighteenth-century Oxford or London. The Italian academies of the period were direct precursors to the scientific societies of the later seventeenth century and the Parisian and provincial salons of the eighteenth.

As in each of this book's sections, the original sources we have for this section's topics are many and varied. Yet a few categories are missing. For example, legal and governmental sources are probably of relatively little use here, likewise personal records of merchant families, the notarial documentation of peasants, or most business records. Some diaries discuss the programs of academies, and one describes what it was like to row aboard a Florentine galley. Much of the information is contained in the published and manuscript works of the era's professors, explorers, gardeners, engineers, architects, naturalists, alchemists, surgeons, and random collectors. Once in a while one gets a good debate among these folks, as one botanist tries to outdo the last in presenting the best illustrations or explaining the functions of certain organs. Some of these were published by academies,

because these organizations were the non-academic dueling grounds for theorists, discoverers, and inventors alike. Some of the entries in this section deal specifically with this literature, including the alchemical, botanical, cartographical, and medical, while technical illustration receives its own treatment. The entry on Books of Secrets focuses on one type of published source that gathered together much of the amateur, empirical, supposedly tested, and often quite practical advice for accomplishing tasks from dyeing one's hair to changing lead to gold. Then as now, one had to accept what was written with healthy dash of skepticism.

ACADEMIES

The original academy was Plato's school held in the Athenian grove of the same name. The model was laid out in his *Symposium*: a long, leisurely dinner party during which male guests discussed matters of philosophy—love in the *Symposium* itself. Members of a Renaissance-era academy were educated, but academies were not tied to universities; some members were clergy, but academies were not Church-supported. Academies were forums in which members discussed topics of mutual interest, where creative types premiered new works; scientific types shared theories, experiments, and discoveries; philosophical types argued about knowledge and ethics; and subversive types argued about religion and politics. By the sixteenth century proper academies had statutes and rules, formal membership (including few, if any, women), and regular business meetings. At more broadly attended social parties—hosted by wealthy members or patrons—members put on new plays, played irreverent games, and of course ate and drank. In public forums members gave lectures and readings and performed their own plays during Carnival.

A large city might have dozens of these, some very general in interest and others very specific: art, literature and language, or scientific experimentation. Frequent academy founder Anton Francesco Doni in his *Libreria* listed 17 Venetian academies. Many lasted only a few years. Most member lists followed a pattern: humanists and Classical antiquarians; or painters and other artists; or poets and others interested in vernacular language; or natural historians, botanists, physicians, alchemists, and other experimenters. Some were investigated by the Inquisition for heresy (e.g., Rovigo's Academy of the Sleeping), and all of those in Siena were shut down by the new Tuscan government from 1568 to 1603. Naples's Spanish viceroy banned its academies between 1547 and 1550 as potentially subversive in the face of a popular and noble revolt against the regime.

Naples's king Alfonso I apparently sponsored one of the earliest groups, around 1447. The humanist Antonio Beccadelli, an important figure at Alfonso's court, organized the early members, many of whom also worked for Alfonso. After the king's death Beccadelli hosted gatherings at his own villa, and later passed leadership to Giovanni Pontano, after whom it was named the Accademia Pontaniana. Similarly, Lorenzo de' Medici formed the Platonic Academy that met at several of the family villas near Florence. It included painters, poets, physicians, philosophers, and humanists. It closed in 1492 when Lorenzo died. Many historians, however, do not consider these fifteenth-century groups proper academies, as they lacked clear membership, written rules, officers, goals, *imprese* (identifying symbols), and regular meetings.

Though Siena had hosted an Accademia Senese before 1519, little is known of it. The *Intronati* (Stupefied), founded about 1525 by six noblemen to promote poetry and eloquence, seems to have been Italy's earliest proper cultural academy. Their motto was "Pray, study, rejoice, harm no one, believe no one, have no care for the world." Its socially elite members studied, wrote, presented, and argued over literary works in Latin, Greek, and Tuscan. Members wrote pornography as well as plays, the latter for public performance. In 1532 members performed their *The Deceivers* in Siena's Council's Great Hall in the Palazzo Communale. Siena's Congregation of the Uncouth welcomed only urban artisans. They wrote plays and poems, strictly in Italian, that both mocked and pitied rural peasants. All members had to agree to performing a given play: when Salvatore the Tailor went to Rome in 1542 and performed one of their plays, he was expelled.

Florentine groups included the Academy, founded in the 1520s or 1530s by Baccio Bandinelli to study and advance artistic theories (mathematics, perspective), rules, and techniques. Forerunner of the Academy of Design (*Disegno*), members taught beginners, including women, and by the 1590s supplanted many educational functions of the painters' guild. In 1540, Florentine poet, playwright, *novellista*, and student of Tuscan Italian Antonio Francesco Grazzini founded the literary Academy of the Wet Ones (*Umidi*; counterpoint to Padua's the Inflamed). Later renamed the Florentine Academy, Grand Duke Cosimo hijacked it, turning it into a propaganda arm of his state. In Venice, some of the 100 or so members of the Academy of Fame—founded in 1557 by Federigo Badoer—met every day in the new Marchiana Library. They discussed and debated literature, art, music, and science; they salaried lecturers, made public lectures and performances, sponsored publications, and were dedicated to aiding the state through their discoveries. After four years the Academy of Fame was closed down due to debt.

Sixteenth-Century Salons

Women were excluded from most academies, but several well-educated elite women hosted the intellectual and literary cream of society. Like eighteenth-century Parisian ladies, noblewomen of Naples, Siena, Rome, Venice, and Florence presided over readings, debates, and discussions of topics ranging from poetry to politics, religion, and philosophy. Ferrarese duchess Renata of France communed with Calvinist sympathizers until her husband expelled them. Roman widow Vittoria Colonna hosted circles—tainted by heterodoxy—with her aunt-in-law in Ischia, and solo in Rome, Viterbo, Orvieto, and Ferrara. Sienese noblewoman Laudomia Forteguerri was noted for her family, circle, patronage, and poetically expressed love for Habsburg princess Marguerite.

The heavily Spanish-influenced city of Naples was home to many academies, including one of the first dedicated to scientific matters. The Men of Leisure, also called the Academy of the Secrets of Nature, was probably founded by nobleman Giambattista della Porta. The members of the academy met at his palazzo in Naples or that in nearby Sorrento, where they sought to prove or disprove “scientific” findings announced in popular Books of Secrets. Each followed his own interests in pursuing how to manipulate nature to socially beneficial ends. Its activities in early scientific experimentation spawned Italian progeny such as Rome’s Academy of the Linx-eyed (1603) and the Florentine Experimenters (from 1657).

See also: *Arts*: Antiquity, Cult of; *Painters and Their Workshops*; *Women Poets and Their Poetry*; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Gardens; *Palazzi*; *Villas*; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Carnival; Games and Pastimes; Noble Pursuits; Reading; Theater, Popular; *Science and Technology*: Alchemy; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Collecting and Collections; Libraries; Secrets, Books of

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AGRICULTURE AND AGRONOMY

The Middle Ages had made major advances in agriculture, techniques, tools, and even crop breeding. Examples include three-field crop rotation, the mold-board plow with its sharp iron cutting blade, the importation of crops such as rice and cotton, and improvements in the yield of grain crops such as wheat. Medieval advances had been necessary in part because the population across Europe was steadily increasing, and greater numbers had to be fed. At the same time, cities were burgeoning, putting ever greater demands on agricultural workers and the landlords for whom they worked. In Italy, as elsewhere, marginal land that was relatively unproductive had been put to work to expand output, but at a great cost in efficiency. As long as rural populations and urban demand were high, inefficiency was acceptable even at high marginal costs for the additional output. Then came 1348 and the Black Death.

The plague killed off between 30% and 40% of the Italian population, more in the cities. Demand for staples—grain, wine, olive oil—dropped accordingly, but so did the population producing the supply. In addition to deaths, peasants and other agricultural workers moved to farming regions where working and living conditions were superior. They also migrated to cities, where there was an immediate need to replace population losses. Marginal land was abandoned, but there was a new sense of urgency to create greater efficiencies, to make each peasant and each acre more productive. As urban businessmen acquired farmland, they brought with them the profit motive and rationalism of the city. More and better tools and animals meant greater efficiency and effectiveness by those who utilized them. Many peasants undertook sharecropping agreements (*mezzadria*), which increased their incentive to produce more. In addition, they were encouraged to bring their surpluses to market for cash, a commodity everyone needed.

By the fifteenth century, many of these changes had taken hold and food prices fell or remained steady. Agricultural practice was a complex phenomenon because the factors that impacted it were so varied. Supply of labor was an important factor,

and that was growing. Supply of land—good land—had been trimmed back initially, but other means of extending it, by draining swamps in the Tuscan Maremma or the Po Valley, were beginning to be undertaken. Weather was a huge factor, with maturing wheat especially sensitive to rain. In general, the Renaissance era was a period of cooling temperatures after the relatively warm Middle Ages. Growing seasons were cut back somewhat, which meant the need to alter the rhythm of rural labor. Other natural influences, from floods and droughts to crop-consuming insects, also affected supply, while recurrences of plague brought down local populations—and demand. Soldiers, bandits, refugees, and other disruptive groups caused real havoc, especially if it was near harvesting season. Friendly soldiers were sometimes ordered to burn crops, whether harvested or in the field, merely as a means of depriving the invading enemy.

The sixteenth century witnessed broad disruptions in agricultural life as Italy suffered through the Italian Wars (1494–1559). Land reclamation and irrigation projects were proposed and completed, but wars negated much of this. Interest in agricultural matters was spurred by revivals of Greco-Roman classics on agriculture, including works by Columella and Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* (household management), which was translated into Italian and published in 1540. In 1597, Carmelite friar Giuseppe Falcone published *A Work of Agriculture*, which purported to be a collection of all ancient writing on the subject. Works on agriculture by contemporary authors also appeared, including Count Giovanni Bonardo's *The Riches of Agriculture* (1586), and Alvisé Cornaro's *On the Sober Life*, which went through a dozen editions. Each of these was aimed at the literate and profit-motivated landowner who sought to increase yields and minimize the effects of outside factors.

Beside the ravages of war, the sixteenth century saw a huge jump in urban populations, which meant a huge jump in demand for food. Food prices rose, but this did not always translate into higher profits for the growers, as even wheat was shipped to Italy from as far away as Poland. Despite the literature, the willingness of Italians to innovate waned during the century, and landowners became much more conservative and risk averse. In the south, upland agricultural land was enclosed and given over to sheep raising, while during winters sheep came down from the hills and encroached on otherwise good farmland. Grains fed the population, but sheep brought profits to the state, so Neapolitan authorities were torn. In Tuscany, the new Medici regime began a state-supported program of rationalization. Here, food was both necessary for the urban populations and was taxed to provide state revenues. Cosimo I especially tried a kind of proto-mercantilism in an attempt to make his state self-sufficient in food. He had all productive lands mapped carefully and property lines recorded, and had inspectors ensure that all potentially productive land was being used to good effect. Other states followed his lead as agricultural production increasingly fell under the purview of the peninsula's rulers.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Grain Trade; Mezzadria; Trade Routes, Overland; *Family and Gender*: Families, Laboring Class; *Fashion and Appearance*: Fabrics, Domestic; *Food and Drink*: Foodsellers and Markets; Fruits and Vegetables; Grains and the Wheat Market; Hunger and Famine; *Housing and Community*: Gardens; Villages and Village Life; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: Contado and Subject Towns; War and Civilians; *Religion and Beliefs*: Monks and Monasteries; *Science and Technology*: Academies; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Pharmacopeias and Materia Medica

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ALCHEMY

In the world before science, alchemists developed theories and conducted experiments designed to unlock secrets of nature. Nature produced a plethora of things from what were understood to be a few building blocks: and the alchemist sought to find out how nature did so, and how to mimic these processes artificially. For some, this was merely a matter of curiosity and the wonder of seeing theory come alive in reproducing a natural physical process. For other Renaissance-era alchemists, the goal was more practical: to learn how to create things that would improve human lives.

The great example was gold. Alchemical theory held that the earth naturally purified base metals such as iron, tin, or lead with heat and other unknown processes. Purified metal was gold or silver. Alchemists avidly sought to reproduce these results in their laboratories. Success would mean great wealth, of course, and the thrill of discovery. But it would also mean that gold, considered a medical cure-all, could be made available cheaply to all in the era of plague, syphilis, and other scourges. Here nature provided another mystery; for to be truly effective,



In 1570 Grand Duke Francesco I de' Medici (1541–1587) had Flemish painter Giovanni Stradano (Jan van den Straet, 1523–1605) create this work for his studiolo in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence. Assistants squeeze and boil and pulverize various chemicals. Oil on slate. (DeAgostini/Getty Images)

gold had to be ingested as drinkable or potable gold, another goal of alchemical research.

If this all sounds vaguely scientific, it was. To its adherents alchemical theory was a form of truth. They criticized those who merely made or discovered things as people who stumbled upon these in the dark. Theory grounded such activity, pointing it in fruitful directions. As early scientific theorist Francis Bacon would write, echoing Aristotle, to control nature one must first understand it. But alchemical theory differed for each practitioner. It had roots in ancient mysticism, Christian angelology, Islamic experimentalism, medieval natural philosophy, and technological pursuits such as metallurgy and brewing. Unlike proper science, however, alchemy never progressed. Its practitioners usually toiled alone

and without reference to each other; they maintained silence in part to avoid authorities who opposed their pursuits and in part to keep any progress to themselves. Their tradition was to couch theory and procedures in arcane and even poetic and mythical terms that meant nothing to the uninitiated. Though their work was fundamentally empirical and experimental, they never developed or shared a methodical approach as developed by seventeenth-century figures such as Bacon, Galileo, and Descartes.

Yet alchemy played important roles in sixteenth-century Italian culture. Its simpler procedures and products appeared in printed and widely circulated Books of Secrets throughout the sixteenth century. Rulers from the emperor Rudolf II down built expensively outfitted and supplied laboratories and hired alchemists. In Italy the most famous was the Medici laboratories located in the Palazzo Vecchio under Duke Cosimo I, and then under his successors near the convent of San Marco and ultimately in the Uffizi complex. In later sixteenth-century Mantua,

Duke Vincenzo Gonzaga was a major patron from whose alchemists he expected medicinal products, including potable gold, and better forms of gunpowder and even poison gas to use in war. Of course, such research could be dangerous, resulting in burns, blindness, skin rashes, poisoning orally or through the skin, headaches, paralysis, and even tuberculosis.

In such settings researchers sought the holy grails of base metal transmutation and the elusive “philosopher’s stone.” Along the way, however, they made advances in leather tanning, glassmaking, ceramics, painters’ pigments and textile dyes, gilding techniques, scents, gunpowder, metallurgy, beauty aids, and medicines. The last field was advanced by the Swiss practitioner known as Paracelsus, who sought to replace the traditional organic, humoral basis of medicine with one emphasizing the supposed roles of inorganic metals and compounds in the body. The Protestant Paracelsus, who sought a Lutheran-type reformation of medicine, and his unorthodox ideas, gained little traction in Counter-Reformation Italy, but some penetrated into ducal and private laboratories. Of all the procedures utilized by alchemists, distillation became the most widely applied. The two-part alembic, or pot still, was commonly found in apothecary shops, where it was used for concentrating liquors, perfumes, and other fluid substances.

Alchemy had always been a controversial pursuit. It was banned by papal decree in the early fourteenth century, Dante placed alchemists in the Eighth Circle of his *Inferno*, and Petrarch dismissed their activity as producing only sweat, smoke, ash, words, deceit, and degradation. Church Inquisitors pursued alchemists as either frauds who made false claims of success or sorcerers in league with demons who produced desired outcomes. Other critics claimed that while naturally produced precious metals had untapped powers, artificially created ones were much less potent. Positive claims permeated the Savoyard Doctor of Law and Medicine Guglielmo Fabri’s *Book of the Philosopher’s Stone and Potable Gold* (1449), and the poem *Chrysopeia* presented to Pope Leo X by Aurelio Augurello. More balanced views came from physicians such as Michele Savonarola of Ferrara. He wrote around 1440 that many of the alchemist’s goals were unattainable, such as potable gold, but that alchemical means could produce materials of genuine medical benefit, especially *aqua ardens* (burning water or high-proof alcohol), which he claimed was effective on plague. Florentine humanist Benedetto Varchi in *Questions on Alchemy* (1544) depicted his subject as a useful art and dismissed links to magic or sorcery. At the same time, Sienese metallurgist Vannoccio Birinuccio credited alchemy with many technological advances but condemned beliefs it could reproduce natural processes.

See also: *Arts:* Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; Painters and Their Workshops; *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; *Fashion and Appearance:* Cosmetics;

Dyes and Dyestuffs; Gems and Jewelry; Scents and Perfumes; *Food and Drink*: Drugs; *Housing and Community*: Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Politics and Warfare*: Firearms and Artillery; *Religion and Beliefs*: Magic; Witches and Sorcerers; *Science and Technology*: Academies; Collecting and Collections; Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Glassmaking; Metallurgy; Pharmacopeias and *Materia Medica*; Secrets, Books of; *Primary Document*: A Metallurgist on Alchemy: Vannoccio Biringuccio. *Pirotechnia*

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ANATOMY AND DISSECTION

Surprisingly little was known of the structures of the human body in early Renaissance-era Italy. Classical medicine had championed study of the subject, but this was hampered in practice by cultural taboos against dissection, the resulting substitution of animals for humans, and the intrusion of Aristotelian philosophy. Islamic medicine and natural philosophy absorbed and passed this tradition along to later medieval Christian medical schools and universities. The dominant medical paradigm was based on balances of the four humors that supposedly flowed through the body and regulated health. Physicians gauged these by external signs such as urine and the pulse, and had little use for understanding what lay beneath the skin. Surgeons—who did penetrate the skin to repair wounds, bleed people therapeutically, and remove growths—tended to rely on practical training rather than classes and books. Corpses were opened up by surgeons or other specialists for specific purposes: for autopsies to determine cause of death, to confirm the holiness of saintly religious, to embalm important people whose bodies would be displayed, and to perform caesarian sections on women while attempting to save and baptize the child. Apart from stomach contents and whether the heart appeared healthy, little was asked of or learned from these procedures.

Academic dissection of cadavers did take place beginning in the later thirteenth century. Mondino dei Liuzzi claimed he dissected two female corpses, the

results of which he recorded in his 1316 *Anatomia*, a work that was still required reading at Padua's medical school in the 1540s. Despite his experience, Mondino related what ancient tradition—with all its errors—prompted him to see and relate. For over 200 years dissection would be a matter of reading Mondino while displaying the parts of the corpse as illustrations to the lecture. Dissecting was to be done in public, in long, drawn-out rituals that took weeks and had scores of viewers. Surgeons, medical students, physicians, apothecaries, and civic officials were expected to attend, while others did so out of curiosity. A surgeon cut the body up, while a professor of anatomy read Mondino from a high lectern, and a third pointed to the location or body part being discussed. To help preserve the body across a week or more, these were held in February, when students were on break and could attend. Laws in fourteenth-century Venice and Florence allowed or mandated public dissections, though the 1405 statutes of the Faculty of Arts at Bologna contain the earliest set of rules and restrictions: who could attend, whose corpse could be used, and what was to be done to it after. Universally, only the bodies of executed criminals might be displayed, which meant there were relatively few female cadavers. Despite its own cult of relics, the Church objected to carving up bodies, but not too strenuously. From the 1480s the papal attitude was that while the soul belonged to God and the Church, the body was at the state's disposal, at least until Christian burial.

Neither Church nor state sanctioned—and Venice outright prohibited—private dissections, which were conducted by medical students, professors, or surgeons in their own homes or shops. Cadavers had to be obtained informally, which might mean digging them up—the first known prosecution for which was of four Bolognese medical students in 1319—or stealing them from hospitals or off the gallows. Only a chosen few secretly attended each of these secret displays, which gave those present a far better view and chance to work hands-on with the corpse. As with public dissections, private ones might also feature dissections and vivisections of animals as a way of understanding similarities and functions of bodies' elements. That artists, such as Michelangelo and Leonardo, had deep interests in human anatomy is well known, and it is far more likely that they fed these through private rather than public academic sessions. From 1563 Florence's Academy of Art required students to attend public dissections.

The early sixteenth century saw significant changes in Italian anatomical study. Between 1490 and 1543, 11 new anatomical texts challenged Mondino's monopoly. This included surgeon Berengario da Carpi's 1521 *Commentary on Mondino*, with its 20 new woodcut illustrations. Experience, or empiricism, was the watchword. Authorities, whether Classical Galen, Islamic Avicenna, or Mondino, had to be challenged and corrected. While some stubbornly defended the accuracy of traditional texts, especially Galen's, others valued firsthand anatomical study as an

Robbing the Grave

Human dissections require human corpses. While civil and university regulations provided for cadavers for public academic dissections, those performing private anatomies had to provide their own. The great anatomist Andreas Vesalius recounted how he took possession of an executed thief's rotting corpse hanging by Louvain's city gate. He boiled the bones and reconstructed the skeleton for study. Renaissance-era medical students wrote of digging up freshly buried executed criminals or disease victims from local hospital cemeteries for use on dissecting tables in a pharmacy or their anatomy professors' homes. Civil authorities repeatedly forbade the unauthorized disinterring of buried bodies, despite the increase in private dissections.

investigative pursuit. Books could be of use, but only if they reflected reality and were illustrated in a way that was both accurate and useful. In 1543 Padua-trained Andreas Vesalius published his *Fabric of the Human Body*. Its artistically produced plates revolutionized anatomical illustration. The most famous depicts him in a crowded Classical theater lecturing beside the corpse and doing what had been done by assistants: no need for Mondino.

Yet Vesalius worked to correct not overthrow Galen, who retained his place of authority. Increasingly, universities and medical schools added anatomy programs or added to existing ones, but many instructors continued to drone from texts as assistants cut and prodded for the audience. Padua famously built two specific sites—anatomical theaters—for better viewing and crowd control in the 1580s and 1590s. Meanwhile students understood the value of direct access to the subject of study, complained of lacking it, and continued with their subversive private dissections.

See also: *Arts:* Art, Civic; Portraits; Sculpture; *Family and Gender:* Health and Illness; *Housing and Community:* Barbers and Surgeons; Physicians; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Executions; *Science and Technology:* Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Medical Education; Surgery; Universities

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ASTROLOGY

In the Middle Ages and Renaissance era, astrology was a science. It was the study of celestial influences on terrestrial life and events. The underlying belief was that movements of heavenly bodies brought about changes on the earth, though how exactly was left unclear. Changes could be routine and cyclical, such as the seasons, or irregular and even terrible, such as floods or plagues. The stars—including the planets—were God's instruments for effecting events in individual lives and in societies: the king dies and his kingdom is overrun. The astrologer was the expert who knew what to look for and what it meant; he was part scientist and part prophet. Though belief in celestial influences was widespread, among the ignorant and the learned, Jews and Muslims as well as Christians, it was neither uniform nor always informed.

Because astrology required deep knowledge of the movements and positions of stars and planets, it relied upon charts of movements and mathematical calculations based on them. It was a learned person's game, and was in fact taught in universities as a facet of astronomy. While astronomy studied celestial movements, astrology interpreted their impacts. Astrology was also taught as a branch of medicine—at Bologna from 1405—into the sixteenth century, since physicians and surgeons used celestial information to shed light on patients' underlying constitutions and to dictate the best times and treatments for therapy or treatment. Most professional astrologers who served Italy's rulers had been trained as physicians and did double duty at court. Popular notions of astrology circulated in books and pamphlets, and celestial influences were known to be key to successful magic

and alchemical processes. Both bona fide and fraudulent astrologers prepared and hawked talismans containing written formulas understood to “draw down” celestial powers to protect wearers from plague or other illness. Charlatans also sold colored glass bits as gems that focused specific “heavenly rays” for the same effect, power that genuine gemstones supposedly wielded.

Astrology’s most typical use was to determine the optimum time to perform some task over which the stars had influence. A military victory might be more likely on Friday than the following Saturday; a medicinal plant might have greater potency if picked in September than October; or a marriage, given the birth dates and times of the parties, might be more likely to succeed if celebrated under Taurus than Aries. At Ferrara Duke Leonello d’Este chose his wardrobe each day according to celestial positions; and Milan’s Duke Ludovico Maria Sforza never made a major decision without consulting his team of astrologers. The fifteenth-century Florentine government routinely consulted the stars before appointing its military commander. Specific body parts and humors were subject to celestial influence, so operating on or therapeutically bleeding a person from a specific body area may have been more effective if performed on one day rather than another. Physicians and surgeons even carried cheat sheets known as Zodiac Men, on which a sketch of a body had its parts labeled with the appropriate zodiacal signs. On a grander scale, the conjunction of several planets in a single zodiac sign could signal catastrophic changes. The Black Death that began in 1347 was retroactively ascribed to such a conjunction a few years before. In 1524 three major planets in Pisces screamed a major flood, an interpretation publicly accepted by three contemporary popes. None occurred. Even so, such prognostications sold many cheap handouts in Italy’s marketplaces.

Astrologers may have been best known for casting horoscopes; even Galileo did one for his son. Knowing the day and exact time of a person’s birth, the astrologer could use his charts to determine the relative positions of the sun, moon, planets, and regions of the sky known as the zodiac houses. This could be done for a newborn or a mature spouse-to-be. The more accurate the time and date of birth, the more accurate the conclusions to be drawn. For older people birth information was often lost. Interpreting the data was not arbitrary but based upon long-standing astrological classics by such men as Ptolemy (second century AD, *Tetrabiblos*) and ninth-century Abu Masar (*Introduction to Astrology*). Because the Church and humanism taught that people had free will, adherents of horoscope-casting had to write in terms of tendencies and not determinism. The man born under a conjunction of Venus and Saturn would have a tendency to participate in homosexual acts, but had the free will to resist, wrote Florentine physician and philosopher Marsiglio Ficino.

Critics may have accepted earthly influences from the stars, but they rejected the empty promises of astrology. Influential fifteenth-century friars San Bernardino of Siena and Savonarola preached that astrology was false and distracting at best and the devil’s own at worst. Pope Paul IV in the 1550s broke with papal humanist

tradition and condemned astrology, as did the Council of Trent. Astrological books appeared on the *Index of Forbidden Books* in 1559, and from 1585 the Roman Inquisition prosecuted practitioners. In his *Declamation on the Uncertainty and Emptiness of Sciences and Arts* Cornelius Agrippa labeled astrology mere poetry and lucrative charlatanry that denies Providence and corrupts true medicine and natural philosophy by replacing cause and effect with fables.

See also: *Family and Gender*: Birth and Midwives; Fertility, Conception, and Contraception; Health and Illness; *Fashion and Appearance*: Gems and Jewelry; *Food and Drink*: Drugs; Galenic Health Regimens; *Housing and Community*: Barbers and Surgeons; Physicians; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Calendars: Sacred and Profane; *Religion and Beliefs*: Magic; Prophecy and Apocalypticism; *Science and Technology*: Astronomy before Copernicus; Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Medical Education; Plague Treatises and Consilia

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ASTRONOMY BEFORE COPERNICUS

Astronomy during the Renaissance era was a subject in the universities' liberal arts curriculum and a discipline of observational study for specialist scholars. It was also a branch of natural philosophy that was quite dear to the heart of the Catholic Church,

since it concerned the very seat of God (if the earth was His footstool as the Bible says). Astronomy was also linked by its object—the fixed and wandering stars (planets)—with astrology. While astronomy sought to describe the movements of celestial bodies, astrology sought to interpret these in terms of their influence on the earth and its people. As long as astrology did not claim that its practices could predict the future, or that the stars or wandering stars predetermined human fate, it was acceptable and even appeared as a course of study in medical schools. As one of the liberal arts, astronomy was a part of the quadrivium, which dealt with arithmetic, geometry, and their applications to sound (music) and time as determined by study of the heavens.

Common people had little knowledge of or probably interest in astronomy. They listened to what the preachers said, and read what Dante wrote in his “Paradiso” and left it at that. Much more interesting in the popular mind was astrology, since it was considered applied astronomy and thus practical. The fundamental teachings of the Church, astrologers, and most academic astronomers had been laid down in Antiquity. The earth was at the center of the universe, was spherical, and was motionless or nearly so. It was circled by the moon, and within this outer sphere the circumference of which was the moon’s orbit was the natural world. This was the world of constant change, corruption, coming into being and going out of it, of error and sin and ultimately death. This was our world, the world of humanity in body and soul. It also contained hell. Beyond the lunar orbit was a world of near-perfection. The orbit of the moon and each planet was a circle, which is the only perfect motion. Bounding the universe was the sphere of fixed stars. Outside of this was heaven and within it nested spheres described by the near circular orbits of so-called wandering stars. The sun, a very large star, had its orbit between Mars’s and Venus’s. All of the stars were made of *aether* which was the fifth element or quintessence. This whole supernatural system rotated around the earth.

One might think that this model could not possibly survive human experience. And yet, for scholar, churchman, astrologer, and average Italian, it answered every question asked of it, even if there were some problems. In the ages before the astronomical telescope, that is, before 1609, very careful observers noted the seemingly imperfect motions of the wandering stars, which is why they carried that label. They appeared to move regularly, then stop and apparently move backward, stop, and return to regular movement. The apparent retrograde motion was accounted for by observers and scholars with smaller circular orbits within the main track, on the backside of which occurred the apparent backward motion. Circularity of motion was preserved. Other problems involved phenomena such as comets, whose great arcs defied circularity. Their role as divine messengers—God’s finger in the universe pointing to great changes—satisfied most. It was these and some other mathematical issues that led the priest Nicholas Copernicus to question and reassemble the old model. He was both conservative and revolutionary: placing the earth at the

center of the universe was not new, but it did cause a cascade of changes. Even so, he left much intact, including the sphere of fixed stars and perfect, circular motion. Of course, if the earth was just a planet, then of what were the other planets made? Might they be “natural” as well? Might the heavens not be perfect, as universities and the Church had long taught? Galileo had the tool with which to study these questions. And Copernicus’s retention of circular orbits did not entirely solve the problems of predictability that he had set out to address. Doing so would take a model revision courtesy of Johannes Kepler.

But to the person in the street the sun set and rose as it circled the earth. Christ ascended bodily into heaven by rising through the celestial realm. Joshua stopped the sun in its course, as the Bible stated. Odd things appeared in the sky, such as the star of Bethlehem and comets, because God caused them to do so. Navigators and surveyors used their instruments in the same ways before and after the Polish astronomer’s controversial book came out in 1543. To readers of Dante, who took allegorical meanings very seriously, while alive humans stood poised between the realm of the saints above and the depths of the damned below. The entire *Divine Comedy* rehearsed Aristotelian astronomy as Christian theology. A generation earlier, the Dominican scholar Thomas Aquinas had done much of this reconciling, which Dante then borrowed for his structure. And so the pre-Copernican paradigm described earlier was reinforced not only in astronomical scholarship, but by lecturers on Dante, Dominican preachers, and the Church generally.

As opposed to this intellectual inertia was what German philosophers used to call the spirit of the age. All manner of scholars were reviewing and revising Classical texts and ideas, including those of Aristotle; mariners were revising Europe’s picture of the earth’s surface; and the Reformation was challenging the very authority and legitimacy of the Catholic Church. And so, when asked by Church authorities to apply his knowledge of astronomy to fine-tuning the calendar, Copernicus started a revolution with his highly technical and almost unreadable *De revolutionibus* (*On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Orbs*).

See also: *Arts:* Dante in Popular Culture; Perspective in the Visual Arts; Print: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory; Preachers and Preaching; *Science and Technology:* Astrology; Maps and Mapmaking; Navigational Tools; Timekeeping

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Books of Secrets. *See* **Secrets, Books of**

BOTANY AND BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION

Before there was science there were the disciplines of natural philosophy and natural history. The first was concerned with higher-order theoretical questions of natural processes and their products, while natural history studied the natural objects that actually exist on the earth. And so, German botanist Leonhart Fuchs (for whom the fuchsia was named) wrote his *History of Plants* (1542), a magisterial illustrated catalogue of vegetation. His Classical predecessors were Romans Pliny the Elder, the student of all things natural (*Natural History*) who died observing the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius; Galen, a physician who wrote on plants’ medicinal properties; and Dioscorides, whose illustrated *Materia medica* (*Medicinal substances*) was the model for Renaissance-era herbals and books on plants. Botany was spurred by the humanist revival of Classical texts, a rising interest in hands-on study, the challenges to medicine and known *materia medica* of plague, syphilis, and other scourges, and new plants revealed by exploration and trade. Botany became synonymous with natural philosophy and natural history, at least at Italian universities. The earliest chairs of natural philosophy were filled by botanists whose lectures were aimed at students of medicine. By the 1540s these academics were increasingly aided by gardens specifically dedicated to the cultivation and study of medicinal plants, and by works such as Fuchs’s, which contained illustrations of plants worthy of the label Renaissance art.

Botanical gardens were spaces dedicated specifically to the growing of specimen plants, rather than for food or decoration. Their predecessors were gardens grown by medieval monasteries, hospitals, and pharmacists, but these Renaissance-era gardens were planted and cared for by universities, rulers, scientific academies, and collectors, both amateurs and professional natural historians. Some were private, but many were open to public view, a visit to which often included a guided tour and lecture on the new or prominent species. The earliest Italian botanical garden of note was in the university city of Padua (1545), though Professor Luca Ghini is said to have convinced Duke Cosimo I of Florence to establish one in Pisa in 1543 or 1544. A Florentine garden followed about 1550 and, like Pisa’s, was located near the ducal stables. By the later 1500s Pisa’s garden was fully accessible to the public,

and the site included a “room of paintings” and a study room supplied with books, shelves, cabinets, and a large table. In his famous laboratories, Francesco de’Medici had his specialists extract aromatic essences from many species for medicinal purposes. The courts of Mantua and Ferrara sponsored botanical gardens, as did authorities in Bologna (1568) and Rome (1563). Other gardeners included medical men and natural historians such as Ulisse Aldrovandi, the self-proclaimed “New Aristotle” of Bologna; Niccolò Gaddi of Florence, whose space was known as Gaddi’s Paradise; and the Mantuan aristocrat Francesco Borsati, whose living collection included 350 species. Garden directors swapped seeds among themselves and with correspondents abroad, collected their own specimens from among Italy’s 1,000 known, and introduced the curious public to an increasingly sophisticated

field of study. A true botanist, Andrea Cesalpino began the systematic organization of botanical data, including by genus and species based on plants’ reproductive characteristics (*Sixteen Books on Plants*, 1583).

Flowers and herbs had long featured in Italian paintings, both displayed and in books. Besides their beauty, they carried messages as symbols or allegories, especially in religious works and portraits. In the 1390s the earliest collection of plant portraits appeared. This so-called *Carrarese Herbal* contained unique illustrations and was a product of the botanical interests of Padua’s medical school. Early illustrated printed botanicals, such as Apuleius Platonicus’s *Herbarium* (1481), simply copied ninth-century manuscript sketches. Some booksellers even used the same image for several plants or cut illustrations out of older books and pasted them



Born in Milan but known for his career at the imperial court in Prague and Vienna, Mannerist painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1526–1593) created a series of allegories constructed of objects such as books, sea creatures, or vegetables. His *Flora* of 1590–1591 celebrates the flowers of spring through the use of a variety of blossoms to create what appears to be a woman’s head. Oil on panel. (Art Media/Print Collector/Getty Images)

into new editions. By the later 1400s Italian painters, such as Sandro Botticelli and Andrea del Verrocchio, were taking great pains to depict flowers that accurately resembled specific types. This trend, along with the evolving discipline of botany, early illustrations of plants by Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Dürer, and printing of the illustrated Classical Dioscorides volume, stimulated the production of botanical catalogues and herbariums that were illustrated according to the latest standards of naturalistic realism. By the 1520s authors such as Otto Brunfels were hiring professional illustrators or painters, such as Hans Weiditz, to provide images for works such as Brunfels' *Living Portraits of Plants* (1521). In 1544 Sienese nobleman and physician Pier Andrea Mattioli published his edition of Dioscorides in Italian. His Venetian printer, Valgrisi, put out 12 editions of 2,500 copies in 12 years, selling an amazing 30,000 copies. Eventually Valgrisi published 25 editions, while another 50 editions of Dioscorides appeared during the sixteenth century. But this was not just a neo-classical fad, as Mattioli and others more than doubled the Roman's original 600 entries. By 1600 there were 54 printed herbals available in Italy alone.

See also: *Arts*: Daily Life in Art; *Economics and Work*: Apothecaries; Spice Trade; *Fashion and Appearance*: Scents and Perfumes; *Food and Drink*: Fruits and Vegetables; Salt and Pepper, Herbs and Spices; *Housing and Community*: Gardens; Villas; *Science and Technology*: Academies; Alchemy; Collecting and Collections; Medical Education; Pharmacopeias and Materia Medica; Technical Illustration

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COLLECTING AND COLLECTIONS

Collecting art, books, antiquities, or rare animals required money, contacts, secure space, and time to procure and to enjoy the items at leisure. The high-end collector needed expertise—either his own or an adviser’s—to make knowledgeable choices of high-quality items, and to pay appropriate prices. Simpler folk collected things they came across in fields, streets, marketplaces, and beaches. Some bought and collected inexpensive prints, gluing them into scrap books. Others recorded and collected recipes, remedies, and beauty and housekeeping hints. Some of their works circulated as printed “books of secrets,” with instructions for almost anything from removing stains to changing lead into gold. Humanists collected Classical texts, antiquarians acquired ancient objects, and botanists gathered living plant species and dried specimens. Monasteries and churches had long collected reliquaries containing bits of saints, but their spiritual motivations differed greatly from those of princely collectors of Roman statuary. The well-educated knew that ancient Roman elites, such as Pliny the Elder, created extensive collections of all sorts of objects, displaying them to visitors in their country villas. The Renaissance era, and especially the sixteenth century, witnessed the expansion of collecting as a hobby, a tool of serious research and study, and a means of gaining societal recognition. Earlier collectors valued things as symbols pointing to higher truths; Renaissance-era collectors found value in the things themselves and as carriers of information about the world of which they were a part. The era also saw the birth of the museum as a formal space in which to store, organize, and display these treasures.

Nobles often had large and eclectic collections. Isabella d’Este of Ferrara, the first woman known to collect antiquities, displayed in her study (*studiolo*) and more private palace (*grotto*) some 1,600 items including 895 coins and medals; 79 vases of jasper, onyx, and rock-crystal; eight clocks; four books of hours; cameos and small Classical sculptures. Elsewhere she kept musical instruments, paintings by the age’s greats, and products of the best goldsmiths. Fifteenth-century Florentines Cosimo, Piero, and Lorenzo de’Medici collected Classical vases, cameos, coins, and other artwork. Gout-stricken and antisocial Piero spent hours of each day with his treasures, and Lorenzo kept his treasures in his *studiolo* in the Palazzo Medici. Tuscany’s Medici Grand Duke Francesco I used his *studiolo* in the Palazzo Vecchio to house his and his father’s collections. In 1586 he moved these to the newly finished and public Uffizi (Offices), but not before the appointed room was decorated by eight sculptors and 20 painters. Perhaps the greatest art patron of the late Renaissance era was Duke Vincenzo Gonzaga of Mantua. He traveled around Italy to purchase works by Raphael, Titian, and Mantegna, and hosted Van

Dyke and Rubens at his court. At his death he left behind some 2,000 paintings and 20,000 other artistic objects.

As rulers of Rome, popes had unequalled opportunities to gather its antiquities, though they often competed with ambitious cardinals who had villas and palazzi to decorate. In 1451 Nicholas V began the Vatican Library with a collection of his own and his predecessor's books, which reached 1,200 volumes by his death in 1455. Sixtus IV started the Capitoline Museum with a group of Classical bronzes, and Julius II the Vatican Museum around the newly discovered statue of Laocoön. The term museum—home of the muses—was first used by historian Paolo Giovio for his villa in Lombardy, which was located near the site of one belonging to first-century Pliny the Elder. On display were portraits of famous men. True collectors not only organized and displayed their acquisitions but catalogued them as well. The Vendramin family of Venice collected art, antiquities, and natural curiosities throughout the sixteenth century, and in 1627 Andrea Vendramin had the collection recorded verbally and in sketches. The resulting inventory fills 16 volumes.

A seventeenth-century account estimated that Italy contained some 250 natural history museums. Apothecary shops traditionally displayed oddities and exotic specimens, and apothecaries were among the early natural historians and botanists who collected and catalogued both domestic and foreign biological species. Some were live but others pickled, dried, or otherwise preserved. Resident charlatans, such as Venice's Leone Tartaglini, displayed "dragons" and "basilisks," while Guglielmo Germerio had ten animal and human fetuses on show. The collection of naturalist Ulisse Aldrovandi contained 13,000 items in 1577 and 20,000 in 1600. 4,454 drawers held these, and Aldrovandi had some 8,000 colored illustrations produced, some of which were published in his lifetime.

See also: *Arts:* Antiquity, Cult of; *Prints:* Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Economics and Work:* Book Printing and Sales; *Housing and Community:* Furnishing the House; Gardens; Palazzi; Villas; *Religion and Beliefs:* Memorials *Ex Voto*; *Science and Technology:* Botany and Botanical Illustration; Glassmaking; Libraries; Maps and Mapmaking; Pharmacopeias and *Materia Medica*

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DISEASE AND HUMORAL MEDICINE

When the Black Death first appeared in 1347, Italian medicine was as advanced as any in the Western world. Physicians trained in early Renaissance-era medical schools absorbed Classical medical and physiological ideas that had been processed through Islamic medical scholarship and practice. By 1500 printers were making the original Greek and Roman medical texts widely available. Despite the winding nature of the path from the fifth century BC, there was continuity in the fundamentals that continued right through the Renaissance era, though not without some important challenges.

From Antiquity the Renaissance era inherited a natural philosophy that recognized four basic elements: earth, air, fire, and water. These building blocks were responsible for everything physical on earth. Each of these had a certain quality—a pairing of “hot” or “cold” with “wet” or “dry”; water was cold and wet—that also characterized the things that consisted primarily of that element. For example, each kind of food had a dominant quality recognized by medical specialists: not surprisingly they considered fish cold and wet. For its part, the highly complex human body consisted of all four elements and relied on maintaining all of the qualities in

a certain balance for proper functioning, or good health. That balance differed with sex and age: men were “drier” than women, while youths were naturally hot and dry and old folks cold and wet. Each body contained four bodily humors, understood as invisible fluids, at least part of whose function was to regulate the balance of the bodily qualities and ensure good health. These were labeled blood, phlegm, yellow bile (or choler), and black bile. Like the elements, each humor had a dominant pairing of qualities: blood was hot and moist, phlegm cold and moist, yellow bile hot and dry, and black bile cold and dry. Various theories circulated about where in the body each humor originated, how they were distributed, or how nutrition affected them. Humoral blood played the principal role of feeding the body; the blood that flowed from a wound was actually a blend of humoral blood and the other humors; and menstrual blood was an even more complex fluid. Humoral blood was pictured as sloshing around within the body rather than circulating as it in fact does, a discovery famously made by Englishman William Harvey and published in 1628.

Humans lost humors through excretion or evacuation of fluids such as sweat, spittle, tears, pus, semen, milk, urine, blood, and phlegm. A healthy diet that included foods of various qualities provided the means of replenishing these losses, but too much of a single quality of food, such as lots of “wet” ripe fruit or fish, would prove detrimental. As the Greeks had taught regarding many subjects, moderation in all things was best. The ancients and Arabs taught that in addition to eating and losing bodily materials, the humors, and thus health, were affected by whether one got enough exercise and rest, sleep and time awake, good fresh air (bad air = *malaria*), and whether one’s emotions were maintained in balance. A life lived in too much frustration, sadness, or joy might result in bad health for the body. Since each humor was also associated with a heavenly body, each was subject to its planet’s “influence” (perhaps causing influenza). A particular configuration of planets in the sky might mean an effect on earth from it being a good day on which to harvest a certain medicinal plant to an occurrence of plague breaking out. One’s horoscope at birth was thus believed to shed light on which humors might dominate during one’s life.

When an individual displayed signs of a disease, the medical world’s first response was to determine the symptoms’ relation to a humoral imbalance or corrupted humors. Only during the later nineteenth century did scientists determine that germs caused diseases and their symptoms. For the Renaissance-era physician fever, blotches on the skin, profuse sweating, nausea, or diarrhea, coughing, reddened eyes, cloudy or dark urine were external indicators of internal humoral problems. Medical knowledge consisted of recognizing the groups of symptoms and knowing what medical tradition prescribed as treatment: more or less food or drink of certain types; appropriate ingested pharmaceutical supplements or topical

preparations; more or less rest; or purgation by causing vomiting, sweating, urinating, bowel movements, passing gas, or coughing up phlegm, or bleeding through an opened vein. The fact that some people recovered and some died from the same combination of symptoms and treatment did not faze the Renaissance-era doctor, since each individual's underlying condition of health could support or hinder the prescribed remedies.

Syphilis

The terrible venereal disease caused by a spirochete bacterium was first recorded in Europe in the summer of 1494. Spanish and invading French troops squared off in Naples, and many began to suffer its symptoms. Called the French disease by the Spanish and the Neapolitan disease by the French, it spread through Italy with the retreating French army. By year's end Italians were spreading it among themselves, the rest of Europe began to suffer, and physicians' treatments proved ineffective. In 1531 physician Girolamo Fracastoro published *Syphilis*, a long mythological poem locating the disease's origin in America and providing its common name.

Two types of disease presented real problems for this model: pestilential diseases that struck large numbers of people at one time and diseases that seemed to pass from one person to another. The two were not mutually exclusive. One such disease was *peste*, or plague, famously occurring as the Black Death (1347–1350 in Italy) and recurring thereafter throughout the following three centuries. Another was syphilis, which seems to have appeared suddenly in 1494. When thousands sickened and died simultaneously in Messina, Florence, or Rome, only a cause much greater than human behavior could have been at work. In the case of plague, doctors as well as theologians agreed that God hurled the disease at sinful humanity. From the start, medical men blamed an astrological conjunction of planets for creating or releasing poisonous or tainted air (*miasma*) into earth's atmosphere, perhaps from underground caverns. This in turn poisoned the heart and other organs causing sickness and death. Syphilis, too, was associated with divine displeasure, in this case specifically with sexual sins. Inorganic and highly toxic mercury replaced organic topical medicines in horrible regimens of treatment. Some doctors, such as Leoncino of Ferrara, blamed corrupted humors caused by miasmatic air. In both cases the sick were isolated by authorities for fear of the disease spreading by some form of contact or contagion, but how might corrupted humors spread? And if miasma sickened or killed some, why did it not kill or merely sicken

all in a given area? In the face of epidemics, humoral medicine provoked more questions than it answered.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; Spice Trade; *Family and Gender:* Health and Illness; *Food and Drink:* Drugs; Galenic Health Regimens; *Housing and Community:* Health Commissions and Boards; Physicians; Plague; *Science and Technology:* Alchemy; Anatomy; Astrology; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Medical Education; Pharmacopeias and Materia Medica; Plague Treatises and Consilia

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Engines. See Machines and Engines

GLASSMAKING

Ask any tourist who has visited Venice and he or she will extoll the wonders of the city's glassmakers, perhaps producing a necklace of brilliant Murano millefiori beads. Glass had been known to Antiquity and was manufactured in many places in Renaissance-era Italy, but Venice held pride of place. The oldest mention of glassmakers is dated AD 982, and Venice's first guild was formed in 1271. In 1291 the community on Murano Island obtained a monopoly on the craft, and rules were carefully evolved to ensure products of impeccable quality and protect the integrity of the craftsmen and their art. Theirs was a process of extreme complexity, whose empirical development was indeed alchemical: transforming simple sand, soda ash, manganese, and a bit of metal for coloring into brilliant, crystalline objects from flawlessly transparent goblets to imitations of porcelain or fine gems. Glass's flexibility as a creative material is due, however, to its non-crystalline chemical structure.

During the Renaissance era the fundamental ingredient was the purest possible silica derived from pebbles—*cogoli*, preferably from the Ticino River near Pavia—or from crystalline quartz. After baths in hot and cold water, the pebbles

were crushed into powder by water-driven hammers, sieved, crushed again, and sieved again. Silica melts only at a very high temperature, 1710° C, difficult to achieve by burning wood. The needed temperature dropped, however, by adding alkaline soda ash, or fluxing. This was derived from burning certain *sal-sola* bushes from Syria. The ash was also used in making soaps and majolica ceramics, and was often carried as ballast in ships' bottoms. This had to be pulverized, sifted, purified by boiling in water in copper vats, and dried, repeatedly. It took about ten days to remove salts and iron and reduced the ash to only 25% or 30% of its original mass. Manganese could either color or remove color from glass. The best was cheap and came from Piedmont; it merely needed to be pulverized.

The prepared silica, ash, and manganese were mixed in ratios that were closely kept secrets. This powder was mixed with water and baked into a cake for several hours at temperatures between 700° and 800° C. After cooling, these were broken up and stored. Specially designed furnaces with several “mouths” would serve to liquefy the mixture, to which were added bits of broken glass (frit), in clay crucibles. This time temperatures reached 1200° as the crucible sat on a stone shelf. As impurities rose to the surface, they were skimmed; the mass was also dumped in cold water to accomplish the same end. The purified mixture was then cooked for two to six days, being stirred to blend all elements together and to work out any bubbles. Specialty glasses had other ingredients added at this stage, including very pure *cristallo* frit and agents that colored the glass or made it opaque. A brownish precipitate of silver, mercury, cobalt, manganese, copper oxide, iron oxide, and red lead dissolved in nitric acid was swirled in to create *calcedonio* (chalcedony), a translucent, brown-veined glass resembling agate. White milky glass (*lattimo*)



Objects of rock crystal, such as this etched footed pitcher with gold enamel bands, were competitors with high-end glassware among discerning and wealthy customers. It was carved and decorated by Milanese sculptor Annibale Fontana (1540–1587). (DEA/A. DAGLI ORTI/De Agostini/Getty Images)

that resembled porcelain, resulted from a mix of tin and lead; red from this plus copper and iron; and blue from adding tin, lead, and copper or cobalt. Brilliantly transparent *cristallo* used manganese for decolorizing the mixture and required much more time for purification. Its end products could command 100 times the price of the same objects crafted in common glass, which tended to a bluish-green color. Venetian glass maestro Angelo Barovier is credited with perfecting *lattimo*, *calcedonio*, and *cristallo* in the mid-1450s only after hundreds of experiments and slight improvements. Filigree glass was *cristallo* with glass rods carefully criss-crossed within the mass; millefiori—thousand flowers—glass had slices of colored glass rods swirled within.

The shop's maestro then worked the pliable mass, molding it into simple drinking or serving vessels, rolling it flat into window panes, rolling it around into beads, or using a long pipe and paddle to work it into more intricate forms. Glassmakers produced silver-backed *cristallo* mirrors, glass cubes for mosaic work, inkwells, urine jars for physicians, and glass oil lamps for chapels and churches. In 1569 the grand vizier in Istanbul through the Venetian ambassador ordered 900 lamps in three sizes for city mosques. Fine glassware might also be etched with diamond point, gilded, or painted, which required a very careful reheating of pieces one at a time to fuse the enamel. But Venetian fine glass products emerged only around the middle of the fifteenth century, the age of Barovier. Before then they tended to be well executed but utilitarian.

Venice's rulers knew how important it was to protect its main export, and they were happy to establish monopolies, ban imported glass, and allow a glass sellers' guild (by 1436). Workers were highly skilled, had a high degree of specialization of tasks, and were well paid. Each of Murano's 30 to 40 shops hired 15 to 20 men, providing them three meals per day. They also enjoyed several months' mandatory vacation each year, as the furnaces were shut down and repaired. Stealing away a Venetian glassmaker by a German or Florentine firm would have been like hiring away a key corporate officer, and both Venetian rulers and bosses did their best to prevent it. One successful raider was Grand Duke Cosimo I de' Medici, who opened his own furnace in Florence.

Tuscany, along with other regions, had its own glassmaking industry. The Valdelsa was one Tuscan center in the fourteenth century, and a Florentine shop inventory of 1435 lists 99,980 drinking glasses, 14,305 pitchers, and 2,400 flasks in stock. In 1481 a business proposal for furnaces in the Mugello declared it needed 11 workers and could produce 60,000 drinking glasses per month. In 1552 the city could boast 18 glass shops, most of which made their own product.

See also: *Arts: Ceramics, Decorative; Daily Life in Art; Economics and Work: Apothecaries; Manufacturing; Retail Selling; Family and Gender: Heraldry;*

Fashion and Appearance: Gems and Jewelry; Food and Drink: Tools for Cooking and Eating; Religion and Beliefs: Chapels; Churches; Science and Technology: Alchemy; Collecting and Collections

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LIBRARIES

In the Classical world rich and educated men collected books, and there was the great Library of Alexandria. Medieval monasteries produced and stored books, both sacred and profane, and bishops’ palaces featured shelves of books accumulated by their residents. Renaissance-era book collectors, spurred by humanism, antiquarianism, and good taste, gathered manuscript copies of Classical and contemporary texts. The invention of the printed book after 1450 made books available at greatly reduced prices to wide audiences and collectors. Highly desirable new editions of contemporary and Classical works in Latin, Greek, and the vernacular appeared in print only after 1500. Some libraries were strictly private; the books in others circulated only among friends or subscribing members; and some collections came to be open to any with a serious reason to utilize them.

The fourteenth-century papal palace library in Avignon was Europe’s largest, and in 1369 contained 2,059 manuscript volumes. These were not located in one room, but were scattered in 11 locations throughout the palace. Some Italian religious houses had large collections: Assisi’s Franciscans in 1381 possessed 718 books; Bologna’s Dominicans in 1386 had 472; Padua’s Franciscans 426 in 1396 and 1,025 in 1449; while around 1400 the Carmelites in Florence owned 731 volumes. The Benedictine monastery at Praglia, near Padua, listed 1,337 books in 1453, just before the dawn of printing. Monasteries organized their collections according to usage: those for services, those that were consulted for various

practical or intellectual matters, and those used for reading and meditation by monks. Milan's Biblioteca Ambrosiana held about 1,000 volumes before printing and was the earliest general access library in Italy.

As revealed by household inventories, most fourteenth-century personal libraries were narrow in scope and related to the owner's profession as educator, cleric, physician, notary, or lawyer. Legal libraries tended to be the largest, numbering between 100 and 300 works, most in Latin. Since inventories usually listed titles by subject, books themselves were probably organized in this way. Where indicated or surviving, most editions were new, except older Classical Latin works that had not yet become popular.

One of the earliest accessible libraries was gathered by the Carrara rulers of Padua before 1405. Its collection was shaped by the locally vibrant interests in humanism and antiquities, and was shared with Padua's university. In the 1360s and 1370s poet and early humanist Petrarch, who lived in nearby Arquà, was a frequent visitor. Other noble northern Italian bibliophiles included Federigo da Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino. He desired to create the finest library since Classical Rome's fall, and had 30 to 40 scribes copying works for him. He also had Florentine bookseller Vespasiano da Bisticci searching high and low for manuscripts, since Federigo hated the idea of printed books. His goal was a copy of every known work in Classical Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, bound in scarlet with silver clasps. To help Federigo, Vespasiano acquired the catalogs of the Vatican Library and those in Pavia and Florence. Florence's fifteenth-century Medicis collected books as well as art and money. When the avid Florentine book collector Niccolò Niccoli died, Cosimo the elder absorbed his library. Some of its books had been copied by Niccoli himself. Vespasiano also helped Cosimo add to the collection he housed at the monastery of San Marco. To this end he hired 45 scribes who created 200 deluxe volumes in 22 months. The sixteenth-century Medicis moved what there was of the collection to the cloister of San Lorenzo, for which Michelangelo designed a magnificent library (the Laurenziana, 1571). The reading room is half a football field long and 10.5 meters wide. Books were attached by chains to shelves on slant-topped reading desks that faced lengthwise down the hall.

In 1455 the Vatican Library was organized under Pope Nicholas V around a core of 1,160 volumes. Under Sixtus IV four connected rooms overlooking the Belvedere were dedicated to growing collections labeled Greek, Latin, Secret, and Pontifical.

Naples's royal collection arrived from Spain with King Alfonso I in the 1440s. It was housed first at Castel Capuano and later in a room overlooking the Bay of Naples in the Castelnuovo. Alfonso, and especially King Ferrante, patronized and enriched the library. Personnel included librarians, translators, illuminators,

scribes, copyists, and bookbinders. Ferrante kept 30 scribes busy. The library was a center of humanistic culture at the court and served as a school of grammar and theology. During hostilities with southern Italian nobles, royal officers confiscated local libraries and blended them with the kings'. In the 1490s the library followed the Neapolitan kings to Spain and with it went the intellectual heart of the kingdom.

Venice boasted private libraries like that of merchant and diarist Marin Sanudo, which grew from 500 works in 1502 to 6,500 in 1530. It was also home to the "public" Biblioteca Marciana, which was eventually housed in the brilliant structure built by Jacopo Sansovino and Vincenzo Scamozzi (1537–1566). Greek scholar Cardinal Bessarion bequeathed over 1,000 manuscripts at his death in 1468. By the late 1500s private libraries could be large and varied in content. For example, Padua's Gian Vincenzo Pinelli was the center of learned circle of writers, philosophers, and scientists who included the young Galileo Galilei. Pinelli's personal library of some 8,500 manuscripts and printed books was the focal point for these intellectuals.

See also: *Arts:* Antiquity, Cult of; *Painting:* Media and Techniques; *Economics and Work:* Book Printing and Sales; *Food and Drink:* Literature of Food and Cooking; *Housing and Community:* Palazzi; Villas; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Reading; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Monks and Monasteries; *Science and Technology:* Botany and Botanical Illustration; Collecting and Collections; Printing; Secrets, Books of; Universities; *Primary Document:* The Popes' Book Collection: Michel du Montaigne. Visit to the Papal Library. *Travel Journal* (1581)

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MACHINES AND ENGINES

A machine is a tool that converts one type of non-human or animal energy to another. A windmill converted horizontally flowing wind to the vertical rotation of sail-like blades, which large wooden gears then converted to the horizontal rotation of a millstone that ground grain into flour. Water flowing through a mill wheel might also provide the initial rotational energy. In a water mill, a stream might flow over or under a vertical wheel, or the wheel might be turned on its side. Some machines were very large, such as a mill or a crane or a sailing ship that used sails to harness wind power. Some were very small, such as pocket watches, developed in the sixteenth century. Some utilized chemical energy, such as artillery or firearms that used instantaneously oxidized gunpowder in an explosion to propel projectiles, or condensers that were heated with burning fuel to boil substances to separate lighter from heavier components.

Pre-Renaissance-era Italians used machines of many kinds. Without them, building the great cathedrals would have been virtually impossible, likewise hammering metal, fulling cloth, or pumping water to drain land for cultivation. Our period, however, saw many advances in machinery, as mines reached deeper, clocks shrank in size, stage managers demanded more complex stage machinery, shipping needed to become more efficient, artillery grew in size, firearms shrank, and the elites' villas required ever more sophisticated garden machines that sprayed water and made figures and mechanical animals move. Humanism played a role in revitalizing Classical texts that described ancient machines, as in Heron's *Pneumatika* and the ancient Roman military engineer Vitruvius' *Ten Books on Architecture*. Heron described and discussed inventions that moved using water or air power, while Vitruvius included sections on hydrology, siege engines, and construction machinery such as cranes. Ideas spread in manuscripts and printed books, as part of the general education that was transforming even the "mechanical arts." In the fourteenth century, painters were considered mere craftsmen, but as attitudes shifted—and the quality of work greatly advanced—in the end they were reckoned divinely inspired geniuses. So, too, the innovative blacksmith or builder became the brilliant engineer, valued for knowledge and expertise and not just finished products.

Around 1477–1480 Francesco di Giorgio, a Siennese engineer working at the Montefeltro court in Urbino, wrote a manuscript treatise in Italian on architecture and machinery for which he drew the illustrations. Fifty-eight are perspectively correct technical drawings of mills and how their mechanisms operated. Clearly aimed at other engineers (*ingenieri*), the many variations on mills suggest possibilities and emphasize "how-to." A dozen years later he published a second *Treatise*, this time aiming at the engineer's patron with an emphasis on general

principles and providing a single clear image to make his point about the value of mills and other machines. Warfare, both offensive and defensive, was becoming much more complicated, as increasingly effective artillery made medieval forms of protection obsolete. In Verona in 1472 Roberto Valturio da Rimini published *On Military Matters*, the first printed book that included illustrations of machines. Printed technical illustration was in its infancy, but this displayed the potential for spreading not just new ideas but the—so to speak—blueprints for creating new machines. Though printing itself utilized a human-powered tool rather than a proper machine, the press was a machine in embryo, with its finely crafted parts reproducing hundreds of exact copies. Blending Classical aesthetics with the engineer's technical sensibilities was Agostino Ramelli, who produced what historians consider the finest book on machinery of the Renaissance era. Published in Paris in 1588, in a dual French/Italian edition, *Diverse and Artificial Machines* presented both ideal and real machines, basic models as well as variations, through exquisite illustrations that included details showing how the elements of each worked.

In the daily lives of people some machines played tremendous roles. The flour or bread they bought daily was made from mechanically milled grain; the guns the militia carried into battle were machines, as was the clock bell that began and ended their working day. Wealthier folk had in their fireplaces a spit on which they cooked meat: it turned by harnessing the rising heat that turned a finned wheel like a miniature mill. They wore silk clothing whose threads had been twisted mechanically and whose finishes were teased using a machine, and used cooking pots that were stamped out of cheap sheet metal. If the press that put out cheap leaflets on market day was no machine, the paper was made of rags pulped by machines powered by streams in the lower Alps.

See also: *Arts*: Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; Musical Instruments; *Economics and Work*: Clothmaking; Construction, Building; Manufacturing; Slaves and Slavery; *Fashion and Appearance*: Fabrics, Domestic; *Food and Drink*: Feasting and Fasting; *Housing and Community*: Gardens; Villas; Water; *Politics and Warfare*: Firearms and Artillery; Navies and Naval Warfare; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Civic Festivals; *Science and Technology*: Agriculture and Agronomy; Alchemy; Collecting and Collections; Printing; Ships and Shipbuilding; Time-keeping; Tools

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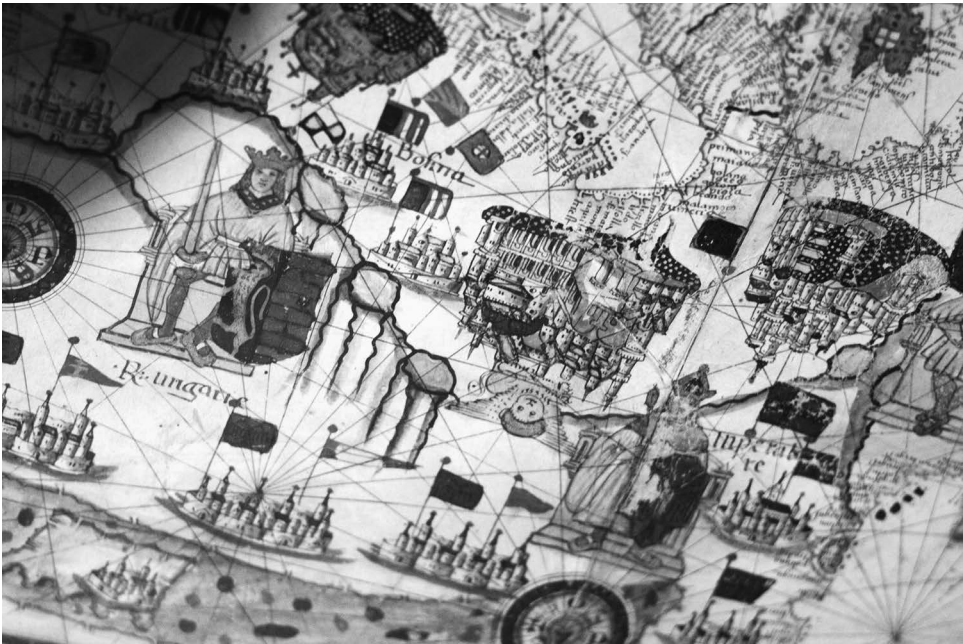
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MAPS AND MAPMAKING

A map is a two-dimensional representation of a portion of the earth's curved surface. While a map may be small enough to carry in one's pocket or as large as a palace wall, the area represented may be the few dozen acres of a villa or as large as the entire earth. Classical map-making was described in Ptolemy's *Geographia* and elsewhere, but no maps survived from the Classical era. Medieval maps were largely symbolic in form and purpose, being meant to celebrate the world of God's creation with Jerusalem firmly at the center. Geographic features such as peninsulas and islands took on odd shapes and while real cities appeared, though so did the Labyrinth of Crete, biblical Gog and Magog, and the mythical kingdom of Prester John. Of course, Classical or medieval world maps never even hinted at the existence of the Americas or Australia.

Certain Renaissance-era trends pointed mapmakers in the direction of creating objects that in some ways accurately represented their world or portion of it. Ptolemy's work was translated into Latin in 1406. This pointed to a methodology and a product that was far more than symbolic, reliant on a mathematical or scalar relationship between the area being depicted and the depiction itself. The invention of linear perspective in Florence in the 1430s provided a mathematical tool for reducing three-dimensional features to a two-dimensional surface. Trade and Turkish advances brought the exotic closer to home, and voyages of discovery encouraged interest in just how the earth was laid out. Artists became increasingly adept at depicting nature and the part of it reshaped by humans, such as cities. With



Detail of Hungary and the Balkans from a larger navigational map, ca. 1528, by Jacopo Russo of Messina, Sicily. Paint on vellum. (Universal History Archive/UIG via Getty Images)

the period's validation of both nature and human achievement came an economic and cultural demand for aesthetically pleasing as well as accurate maps. These came to contain and convey information as well as decorate the walls of civic, patrician, and ducal halls. Maps were a way of celebrating and encapsulating geographical achievements. Military captains displayed the sites of their victories, rulers the territories they controlled, and merchants the many ports they had visited. Renaissance-era voyages exposed Europeans to areas previously unknown, creating a thirst for knowledge of the shapes and relationships of these new contours. Sixteenth-century wars and "discoveries" extended the reach and control of Spain, France, and Portugal, while the Italian Wars made a kaleidoscope of shifting alliances and territorial claims and boundaries within the peninsula.

Historians have estimated that between the eighth century AD and about 1450 only about 1,500 maps were created in Europe. In 1500 some 60,000 maps of all kinds could be found. A century later that number had risen to about 1.3 million. Some of these were painted on rulers' walls, as in the Vatican's Bevedere and the Gallery of Maps, Francesco II Gonzaga's Room of the Cities, and in public buildings in Venice and Siena. But the bulk of this growth was due to the printing press and a popular demand for the wide variety of maps being published. Printed maps were collected in albums, framed and hung on walls, glued to walls and furniture,

or cut out and glued to globes (if the print was created for the purpose, as so-called gored prints were). Most were small scale in size and printed on a single sheet, though some large maps of Rome or Venice were constructed of multiple sheets and extended several feet in each direction. A study of sixteenth-century Venetian household inventories revealed that 10% owned and displayed maps, most of which were world maps, and these were second only to religious images in number. The first print shop selling maps was in Florence, but by 1550 Venice was home to a dozen engravers specializing in maps and several print shops that sold them.

Renaissance-era maps came in many forms. Military leaders utilized maps on campaign; engineers used localized maps for designing and building new fortifications; and navigators in the Mediterranean relied on portolan charts featuring ports of call and distances between them. All of these, like medieval maps, would have been hand-produced for these specific customers. Depictions of specific cities moved from a jumble of buildings with a few towers jutting above a symbolic wall to highly detailed birds' eye or high-angle views that realistically laid out streets, *piazze*, and recognizable architectural monuments. Fifteenth-century advances in surveying techniques, pioneered by the Florentine polymath Leonbattista Alberti for Rome, allowed a mathematical precision even when plotting a landscape as complicated as the islands and canals of Venice. World maps necessarily evolved as voyagers charted the coastlines of Africa, the Indian Ocean, and the Americas. Mathematics played a major role in creating projections that reflected reality rather than the artists' imaginations.

See also: *Arts*: Art, Civic; Perspective in the Visual Arts; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Economics and Work*: Trade Routes, Overland; *Housing and Community*: Palazzi; Villas; *Politics and Warfare*: City Halls; Contado and Subject Towns; Fortresses and Fortifications; Monarchies, Duchies, and Marquisates; Republics; *Science and Technology*: Navigational Tools; Printing; Technical Illustration

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MEDICAL EDUCATION

Medical practitioners came in several types and were educated in one of three ways. Physicians, by definition, studied at and received credentials from medical schools that were usually attached to universities. Some surgeons attended university courses in surgery, but far more were trained as apprentices by other surgeons following guild guidelines. Apothecaries, too, underwent formal apprenticeship. Women who served as midwives or in other healing capacities—herbalists, female surgeons, or providers of charms, talismans, and potions—learned informally from practitioners who took them on as protégés. Male charlatans, quacks, and empirics likewise gained their knowledge and skills informally from others. Some had had a few medical school courses; others learned from fathers or relatives. These men were often nomadic or worked a circuit of towns and cities. Some of them specialized in tasks such as tooth-pulling, bone-setting, cataract removal, hernia treatment, or medical alchemy, and in their travels they sought out other specialists from whom to acquire new knowledge or techniques.

Renaissance-era physicians, surgeons, and empirics are today often lumped together as “doctors.” Indeed, Renaissance-era statutes often treated the three groups together, and a single guild might include physicians and surgeons. But education made all the difference. Time spent at the university meant that physicians knew Latin and had studied logic and philosophy, since medical degrees were usually linked with arts degrees. Formal medical education meant that they had acquired a broad range of knowledge in fields such as anatomy, astrology, botany, pharmacology, surgery, and Galenic food and drug regimens. Above all, it meant that they understood the underlying principles—as then accepted—of fine-tuning the body to achieve good health and avoid illness. Empirics or surgeons

might know that something worked, physicians supposedly knew how and why it did. Possession of this intellectual capital placed them in the highest echelon of society.

Medical school education centered on three emphases: theory, practice, and surgery. Theory and practice were shaped by the traditions of Aristotle, Hippocrates, and Galen. In the fourth century BC, Aristotle had stressed the importance of logic and debate, and these were at the heart of medieval and Renaissance-era scholasticism. He had also privileged the principles of cause and effect and self-education through experience, or empiricism. Ironically, Aristotle's encyclopedic writings were so vast and compelling that they discouraged such inquiry, and reliance on Aristotle's facts and conclusions trumped observation. In medicine, the grip of fifth-century BC Hippocrates and second-century AD Galen of Pergamum was firm. These ancient Greek-speaking physicians wrote or inspired many medical works that became authoritative in the Islamic world and later medieval Christian West. Like Aristotle, both stressed reliance on personal experience and close observation, but their earlier Renaissance-era followers adopted them wholesale. In this physicians had been preceded by Arabo-Persian Muslim scholars, most importantly tenth-century Ibn Sina or Avicenna. His *Canon* was a masterful and encyclopedic treatment of the Greek medical heritage. By the later fourteenth century, key medical texts of Hippocrates, Galen, and Avicenna had been translated into Latin and formed the basis of Renaissance-era medical curricula. Between 1490 and 1593 Galen's works alone saw 660 editions, including 18 complete collections.

This tradition was anchored by the Classical Greek understanding of human physiology. Through the body flowed four humors or—more or less—fluids. Each had a dominant pair of qualities combining “moist or dry” and “hot or cold.” For example, the humor blood was “hot and wet.” Everything from one's bodily organs to foods to the planets was dominated by one or some combination of the four qualities. Good health—and medicine—was a matter of balancing the qualities appropriately to one's age, sex, level of activity, the season, and so on. The physician's practice of medicine meant diagnosing the nature of imbalance and applying appropriate remedies: food and drink, drugs, or changes in lifestyle. Some remedies were mechanical: too much blood? then remove some by cutting a vein. As physicians rarely got their hands dirty, bleeding was usually left to surgeons (or barbers). Physicians, however, knew the how and why. He knew where on the body to cut, how much to drain, and what time of day, week, or the year would be best (hence the need to know astrology); and he would be judge of the next step, if needed. Because the physician worked closely with surgeons, he needed to know what the best surgeons did.

Zodiac Man

The medical model of qualities, humors, and health included roles for celestial bodies. Aries ruled the head; Taurus the neck; Gemini shoulders, arms, and hands; Cancer stomach and chest; Leo heart and back; Virgo bowels and lower abdomen; Libra kidney and buttocks; Scorpio the genitalia; Sagittarius thighs; Capricorn knees; Aquarius shins; and Pisces feet. As reminders, doctors carried cards showing a painted or printed human figure with each body section labeled with the appropriate zodiac sign's name and image. The "zodiac man" also appeared in medical texts, almanacs, Books of Hours, and, of course, astrology manuals.

All of this was quite medieval. Renaissance-era medical education did, however, change between the Black Death and 1600. Besides reading the standard texts as manuscripts in Latin, students would be reading printed—and cheaper—copies by the 1470s. By 1500, Greek became a scholar's language and Hippocrates and Galen were becoming available in Greek (medical humanism). Medical botany, even taught in gardens, augmented lectures on drugs and other remedies by the 1540s. Observing dissections of corpses, both human and animal, was a small part of a student's experience early on, but it became larger during the sixteenth century. The same can be said for learning from teachers as they dealt with patients—clinical teaching—which had sporadic beginnings but became embedded in the curriculum during the 1540s.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Apprentices; *Family and Gender:* Birth and Midwives; *Food and Drink:* Galenic Health Regimens; *Housing and Community:* Barbers and Surgeons; Hospitals and Orphanages; Physicians; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Science and Technology:* Anatomy and Dissection; Astrology; Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Pharmacopeias and Materia Medica; Universities

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METALLURGY

Metals played a fundamental role throughout Renaissance-era Italian culture. As a utilitarian metal, iron and its cousin steel were constantly in demand. Iron nails held ship planking in place; finely edged steel swords were shipped from Milan and firearms from Brescia; peasants used plows with iron cutting blades to prepare for planting and sickles and scythes for harvesting; horses were shod with iron, and it constituted the hammers that pounded in the iron nails. Similar iron hammers nailed the scaffolding that allowed Michelangelo to paint the Sistine ceiling, and to power the chisels that produced the *David* and *Moses*. Every village had its blacksmith, or at least access to one, and their forges ringed cities, far enough out to prevent fires. On his anvil his hammers pounded out inexpensive armor, kitchen knives, and the big iron rings to which horses were tied, which still hang on the façades of many palazzi. Florence's Guild of Armorers is remembered in the statue of their patron saint, the soldier George, whose statue by the sculptor Donatello graces the exterior of Orsanmichele church.

Fourteenth-century techniques for cleansing iron ore of its carbon to make iron, or of leaving a set amount to make steel were probably developed north of the Alps. Iron ore from the mine had to be washed and washed again, and then cooked at high temperatures in furnaces. This essentially burned away impurities. The shape of the oven, how the ore was placed, how temperatures were reached, how long it needed to sit, and other technical matters had evolved through the Middle Ages, with hints from the Muslim traditions in Spain. It was a chemical process that could be developed only by experiment and failure. The first mass of soft metal was removed and beaten on an anvil, with this process repeated several times. The more blows, or the stronger the blows, the better. The beatings helped force out remaining impurities and helped turn a loose mass of iron into a solid mass.

By or during the Renaissance era, three innovations advanced these processes. Watermills set along streams operated trip hammers that mechanically crushed the initial chunks of ore, making the mass fired in the furnace more finely grained and easier to separate out. Similar mills were attached to large bellows that greatly

intensified the heat in the furnaces. These were early blast furnaces, and made the burning of fuel rather more efficient. Lastly, mills were attached to trip hammers that repeatedly beat the refined iron or steel. These innovations, and others connected to the iron industry, entered Italy from Germany through the Alps. Carthusian monks played a role in the Piedmont and Lombardy, and immigrants from the north established new power forges along the subalpine rivers. As a result, Brescia and Milan became the major Italian centers for metalworking, especially of the tools for war. By the early sixteenth century, Brescia, a subject city of Venice, had an estimated 200 workshops turning forged iron into all manner of weapons, armor, and consumer goods. A document unearthed by Braudel (380) claims an unbelievable 60,000 workers in the city and countryside contributing to the industry at its height. Iron mining was also based in these regions. This, combined with rapidly flowing streams and a ready timber supply for fuel and charcoal (often layered in the furnaces with the ore), made Lombardy the perfect location for the iron industry. This in turn caused Brescia to be fought over by Venice and Milan, and Milan by France, the Holy Roman Empire, and Spain.

Iron mines and rushing water were available elsewhere in Italy as well. Siena had well-known mines near Boccheggiano, which were overseen for a while by Vannoccio Biringuccio, who authored the comprehensive *Pirotechnia* (pyrotechnics, 1540). Like other early writers on their crafts, Biringuccio practiced his. He was a miner and metalsmith, and he visited major mining and iron-producing facilities in Germany, produced major artillery pieces for Florence, and managed the papal foundry and munitions production. His was the earliest book to cover metallurgy from mine to battlefield or kitchen, and built on unwritten craft traditions as well as an early work by the German mining and metals specialist Georgius Agricola. Much of what he described he saw at first hand during his travels, and he provided the student of this early chemical and industrial art a carefully constructed picture of facilities, processes, and products. As his subtitle claims, his work treats “every kind and sort of mineral.” One indeed finds discussions of the sources, uses, and issues with materials from alum to zinc, with gold, silver, and copper figuring prominently. Here, what was once a branch of alchemy, or even sorcery, became proper science and technology: the theory and the practice.

See also: *Arts:* Goldsmithing and Fine Metalwork; *Economics and Work:* Coins, Coinage, and Money; Imported Goods, Sources of; *Politics and Warfare:* Arms and Armor; Firearms and Artillery; *Science and Technology:* Alchemy

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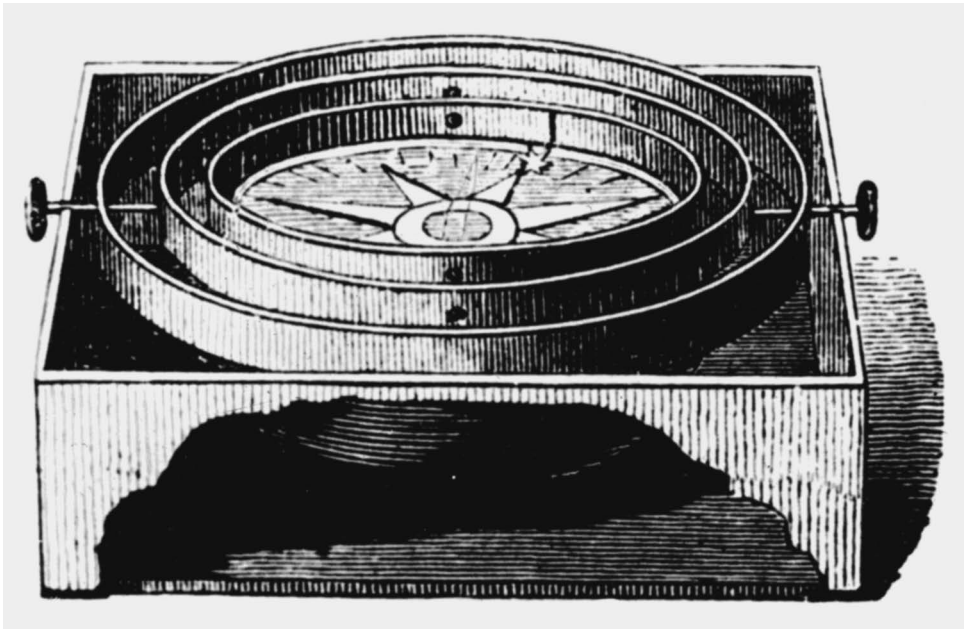
NAVIGATIONAL TOOLS

Renaissance-era Italians went to sea for numerous reasons: war, trade, pilgrimage, diplomacy, missionary work, fishing, punishment, and even tourism. Yet even those who traveled the waves for a living found the sea to be daunting, if not terrifying. In the basins of the Mediterranean and Black Seas, with which Italians were most familiar, weather conditions were usually nonthreatening, at least during the annual sailing seasons. Even so, storms, fogs, maritime enemies, and pirates kept most voyages close to shore. Over the course of the era, several important tools were improved or introduced to make voyages safer and more predictable.

Portolan maps were the navigator's key tool, especially when a ship's position had been lost. Inventories show that officers—several on each ship—carried these on voyages, and descriptions by travelers depict them huddled around them, with compass and protractor, when the need arose. The oldest dates to the early fourteenth century and they were produced throughout the era. Ornate versions that have survived, often with many colorful and fanciful images, were displayed by owners or kept in atlases, while those actually used by mariners were drawn or printed on paper, inexpensive, and sold in specialty shops from at least 1390. Display versions evolved as fifteenth- and sixteenth-century discoveries revealed distant coastlines. But a map designed at a scale to include coastlines from the Black Sea to the Amazon and around the tip of Africa would have been utterly useless to a navigator.

Like a modern hand-drawn map of the route from home to school, the portolan outlined stretches of coastline along which a ship would travel. As the modern map might include landmarks such as the drive-in or park, portolans labeled ports, harbors, bays, and seaside landmarks with names written perpendicular to the coastline. Distances between landmarks were necessarily approximate, though chart-makers tried their best to match locations to the contours of the coastlines. Many included written distances between points. Wind roses indicated the cardinal directions and up to 32 finer distinctions, and surfaces were covered with

characteristic multicolored wind lines that shoot out like lasers from seemingly arbitrary points on the map. Knowing distances between landmarks and estimating the time it took to pass them using an hourglass or a cross staff, astrolabe, or quadrant, could allow an approximation of speed, and recognition of the last landmark would provide an approximation of time of arrival at the next sheltering bay or port city. The early cross-staff (fourteenth century), quadrant (fifteenth century), and mariner's astrolabe (used widely from sixteenth century) told time by determining the angular height of a fixed star or the sun. This was the number of degrees between an imaginary line from the observer to the horizon, and a similar line from the observer to the fixed celestial object. Tables that listed the angles and times they indicated for any given date were carried shipboard. These allowed conversion of the angle to the time for a given date. Also utilized was the traverse table, or *tavola di marteloio*. This allowed the experienced mariner to sort out a series of movements in different directions—zig-zagging—into the equivalent of a straight line. Knowing the initial course and the number, distances, and directions of the course changes one could arrive at the direction or course that the ship should travel.



A 16th-century navigational compass mounted on a pivoting and rotating suspension—called cardan suspension after Italian scientist Gerolamo Cardano (1501–1576). The flexible support dampens the effects of a ship's motion at sea. (INTERFOTO/Alamy Stock Photo)

The means of determining the direction of travel was the magnetic compass, which had been used by Arabs since the 1100s and Venetians from the later 1200s. Simply, a magnetized needle was attached to a thin axle on which it turned freely. The axle was mounted on a card marked with the cardinal directions, which indicated in which direction the ship was moving. It was accurate to about five degrees. This tool allowed the navigator to ascertain his direction of travel on overcast or foggy days and at night when clouds obscured the sky. This made navigating during the winter months practicable, which for Venice meant twice as many annual commercial convoys to the Levant, Egypt, and the Black Sea. The ship itself, whether driven by oars or sails, needed to be directed once a course was determined. Mediterranean ships had long used two paddles at either side of the stern for steering. The introduction of the sternpost rudder, an invention of northern Europeans, made for far more responsive steering by the helmsman. This first appeared in roundships and was later adapted for use in galleys.

The tools that allowed a ship to stay on course from its point of departure to its destination were vital for Italian maritime survival. At the same time as they were adopting or improving these, so were their competitors not only in the Mediterranean but in northern Europe as well. By the mid-sixteenth century, Italian commercial fleets were not only crisscrossing the Mediterranean but also regularly traveling as far as the Baltic Sea. Florentines, the Papacy, Neapolitans, and Venetians constructed and maintained naval fleets. Italians depended on the sea for travel and communication, to make pilgrimages, and stop pirates from raiding their coastlines. Yet while the Venetian Vivaldi brothers were among the earliest Europeans to coast along West Africa (1290s), and Italians named Colombo, Caboto, and Verrazano played important roles in the Age of Exploration, no Italian state participated in the ventures that led to European hegemony in much of the world.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Trade, Seaborne; *Politics and Warfare:* Navies and Naval Warfare; *Science and Technology:* Astronomy before Copernicus; Maps and Mapmaking; Ships and Shipbuilding; Timekeeping

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PHARMACOPEIAS AND MATERIA MEDICA

A pharmacopeia is a generally accepted catalog of medically useful animal, vegetable, and mineral matter—*materia medica*—and recipes for their combination into useful and acceptable drugs. In Renaissance-era Italy, guilds of pharmacists or apothecaries, and sometimes government officials, approved and circulated their choice of text, or one they created, to be used by all recognized practitioners in the jurisdiction. While this did not preclude physicians or shops from using their own recipe books, it did ensure a certain minimal level of standard practice and education of apprentices who studied the work while being trained. Since apothecaries were not educated in formal schools, this was a vital function of the pharmacopeia.

Pharmacopeias had their roots in the *On materia medica* that Dioscorides compiled about AD 65. Despite very clear descriptions, many of the plants he listed in Greek were unknown to future generations. During the Middle Ages Islamic and Byzantine medical scholars added to the work, which entered into Italy through the medical school at Salerno. Around 1200 the *Book of Antidotes of Nicolas* appeared, serving as the basis for Italian apothecary practice for three centuries. In 1499, Florence's apothecary guild published the *Florentine Recipe Book*, the earliest pharmacopeia to be officially adopted. This was the period's gold standard, though it featured many medieval Arab recipes and over two-thirds of its 489 recipes came from the *Book of Antidotes*. Many consider this the first modern pharmacopeia, yet it only contained the recipes and not notes on uses, nor warnings against side effects or counter-indicated mixing of substances. This was in large part because in Florence only physicians prescribed drugs, and it was their responsibility to account for expected effects and possible side effects.

Meanwhile, several trends were reshaping Renaissance-era pharmacology. First, printers began producing small and inexpensive popular home-remedy medication manuals, such as noblewoman Caterina Sforza's *Experiments*. Second, direct contact with Southern Africa, Asia, and the Americas greatly expanded Italy's knowledge of botanical species. These included New World simples such as sarsaparilla, and guaiac, which was used to treat the new scourge of syphilis. Third, this interest helped lead to the establishing of public botanical gardens in which botanists attempted to grow local and exotic plant species. The earliest were in Pisa (Garden of Simples, established by botanist and physician Luca Ghini in 1543), and Florence and Padua in 1545. All were tended by custodians who traveled extensively to gather new species. Fourth, humanists rediscovered the botanical works of Dioscorides and ancient Greek naturalist Theophrastus, a student of Aristotle. A medieval Latin edition of Dioscorides was first printed in 1478. In 1517 an annotated, scholarly edition of *On materia medica* appeared posthumously from the hand of humanist and professor of medicine at Padua, Ermolao Barbaro.

He claimed to have corrected some 5,000 errors in the previous version. In 1533, at the University of Padua, *On materia medica* became the course text for the first medical school classes in pharmacology in Christian Europe. Pietro Andrea Mattioli, a Paduan physician and botanist, translated Dioscorides's work into Italian and published it in 1544. A decade later he provided a greatly expanded and beautifully illustrated Latin edition. His goal was to supplant earlier, error-ridden versions and reform the tradition.

The Paduan garden became a course resource in 1561 with May afternoon classes spent among the plants: by 1602 the course was reportedly drawing 400 to 700 participants, not all of whom were medical students. Monasteries, apothecary shops, ducal courts, and hospitals had long kept medicinal gardens, but increasingly so did physicians such as Maffeo Maffei of Venice and Ulisse Aldrovandi of Bologna, and nobles such as Pietro Antonio Michiel and Girolamo Cornaro of Venice, and Lorenzo Priuli of Padua. In 1566, 14 Venetian apothecaries pledged to establish a public botanical garden, but apparently nothing came of it. Apothecaries also played key roles in advancing botanical and thus pharmacological knowledge, such that some were hailed as “pharmacist and botanist.”

Rediscovering or identifying the exact plants mentioned by Dioscorides was one major task, as apothecaries blamed modern, weaker species for poor results achieved from ancient recipes. For example, the popular drug theriac required 64 ingredients in Dioscorides's recipe but 81 in Renaissance Venice. In 1548, 12 of Dioscorides's plants had not been identified with certainty; but by the 1560s five of these—petroselinio macedonico, calamo aromatic, acacia, costo, and chalciti—had been. The true, ancient form of others—such as balsamo, cinnamomo, and mirrha—had long been lost, leading to the use of inferior forms of well-known balsam, cinnamon, and myrrh in their place.

In the sixteenth century, cities and rulers adopted or adapted pharmacopeias. Bologna had two: one with fairly expensive preparations for the well-off and a second aimed at meeting the needs of the poor. The first had a recipe for true theriac and the second a cheaper knock-off made entirely of local herbs. The Duke of Florence took over publication of the *Florentine Recipe-Book* in 1555. The duke's 1567 edition was slimmed to 262 recipes, with only 24 based on the thirteenth-century *Book of Antidotes*. More than other rulers, Cosimo I de' Medici had an active interest in concocting drugs. He used materia medica from his herbal gardens, and experimented in his own laboratories. He was noted for his *sopravivo* and *mithridatum*, both complex compounds, and for alchemical experiments.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Apothecaries; Spice Trade; *Family and Gender:* Health and Illness; *Food and Drink:* Drugs; Galenic Health Regimen; *Housing and Community:* Gardens; Physicians; *Science and Technology:* Botany and

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PLAGUE TREATISES AND CONSILIA

Before the Renaissance era, physicians and medical instructors produced two types of written works on disease. One was the treatise, which was a comprehensive description and discussion of a recognized medical condition. Many Classical works attributed to Hippocrates and Galen are just these types of studies, and both Islamic and Christian physicians and surgeons continued the practice, sometimes building new treatises around older ones on the same subject. The other type was the *consilium*. When a physician confronted a case that was beyond his understanding or that did not respond to accepted treatments, he would consult with other local practitioners. If this was either not possible or unfruitful, he could send a detailed description of the problem to a major medical figure for his opinion and recommendation. Drawing on his own expertise and experience, and perhaps that of others near him, the consultant would compose a tightly structured response—the *consilium*—including his rationale for recommended treatment. The original physician might apply what he read or ignore it, especially if the patient had died in the meantime.

When the Black Death—probably the bubonic and pneumonic plague—struck Italy in 1347 and 1348, doctors were utterly unprepared for the disease, its devastating effects, and its rapid spread. They shared the humoral theory of the body, and looked first to diet and air as causes. Air—poisoned air or miasma—seemed the likeliest culprit, since so many in a single place died so quickly. Gentile da Foligno was an elderly physician teaching in Perugia. Its civic authorities, and medical guilds in Naples and Genoa, requested consilia on the new epidemic. Gentile opened with and quickly covered divine and astrological causes of the supposed miasma. Proceeding to the diseased bodies, he linked poison in the body to miasma, noting that this poison destroyed all organs in the body that it contacted. It killed by somehow stopping the heart and could spread between victims and the unaffected, though there was no understanding of how it might do so. Prevention, or

prophylaxis, came next, and he first recommended fleeing an area before the first cases appeared. Other suggestions came from standard advice for good health: avoid or fumigate bad air; maintain a good mood, a moderate exercise regimen, and a healthful diet rich in “dry” foods that kept the humors balanced. Gentile suggested specific meal plans and certain “drying” herbs and drugs that he thought would keep the disease at bay. Finally, he gave suggestions for treating those with the disease. Apart from the prophylactic advice, he suggested drawing blood from certain specific points on the body to rebalance that humor, and attacking the swellings or buboes by draining or cauterizing them, or using a topical preparation to draw out the poison. Neapolitan medical professor Giovanni della Penna wrote attacking several of Gentile’s specific ideas of how the “poison” worked in the body, and substituting helpful foods for Gentile’s choices. All of these works circulated among doctors hungry for information.

The outline of causes-nature-prevention-treatment influenced later medical literature as single-case consilia gave way to more generalized tracts, tractates, or treatises. An anonymous author in 1411 gave simple advice to the plague doctor: have the patient make peace with God; follow the course of the disease by checking urine, pulse, sweat, temperature, and feces to the crisis point, from which the patient will either live or die; and abandon the incurable but be prepared to treat those likely to live. Fifteenth-century treatises came from medical men such as Michele Savonarola at the court of Ferrara and Marsilio Ficino, a physician and philosopher at the Medici court in Florence. With the advent of printing their works could circulate even faster and more widely. One of Gentile’s consilia was first printed in 1472, and not for the last time.

Paracelsus and Plague

Rebellious sixteenth-century Swiss physician Paracelsus abandoned and attacked Galenic humoralism in favor of his own mineral-based view of human physiology. Replacing humors were three “principles” he named sulfur, mercury, and salt. Good health required a balance of these. Disease resulted from the effects of outside “seeds” on specific organs; the best medicines were alchemically prepared inorganic concoctions. He wrote three plague treatises in the early 1530s after experiencing and treating it, and recommended use of a prophylactic amulet called *zenexton*. Italian followers included famous empiric Leonardo Fioravanti, who also treated plague and wrote a plague treatise.

Surprisingly, very little changed within these books, despite the experience of repeated epidemics across the Renaissance era. All authors—except a few

followers of Swiss chemical-physician Paracelsus—toiled under the tenets of Galenic humoralism and miasma theory; therefore theories of causation and recommendations for prophylaxis and treatment remained all too similar. The audience for these works, did, however, begin to shift during the sixteenth century. Health board members and other authorities responsible for maintaining public health and battling epidemics took interest, and some physicians who served as health officials published plague tracts. Medical science was in its infancy, and medical education was not much more sophisticated. Despite its presence for over two centuries, plague first appeared in the medical curriculum in Padua only in the 1570s. Rather than teaching from any of the many contemporary or recent texts on plague, the faculty presented morning lectures on the text “On epidemics” and afternoon sessions on “Curing diseases,” both part of the 2,000-year old Hippocratic corpus. At least the plague tracts presented clear descriptions of symptoms and disease courses as actually witnessed and examined by contemporary doctors and surgeons. They minimized theory simply because the disease as experienced did not fit nicely into the day’s dominant theoretical model.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender*: Health and Illness; *Food and Drink*: Drugs; Galenic Health Regimens; *Housing and Community*: Barbers and Surgeons; Health Commissions and Boards; Physicians; Plague; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Science and Technology*: Anatomy and Dissection; Astrology; Diseases and Humoral Medicine; Medical Education; Pharmacopeias and Materia Medica

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PRINTING

French historian Fernand Braudel asked who was served by printing: his answer was everyone, “it expanded and invigorated everything” (Braudel, 401). Among revolutionary technologies, Europe’s invention and embrace of printing is at the top of the list. Block printing, moveable type, and paper originated in China, and



Late 16th-century map of Siena and its surroundings printed in Amsterdam. The Medici balls decorate the shield, while the Virgin Mary blesses the figure of the city above a list of the notable places within. Labeling is in Italian, French, and Latin. (Universal History Archive/ UIG via Getty Images)

the West certainly borrowed the third and quite possibly the first two. The European accomplishment was to link type, image, and paper to a machine that rapidly fed a large and growing market for the written word. Braudel estimated that printers produced 20 million books in 236 European towns between 1453 and 1500; and during the following century another 140 million to 200 million. Venetian presses alone may have created as many as 2.5 million books in the fifteenth century and 18 million in the sixteenth.

For mechanized printing to be effective, printers needed a far smoother and more regular (and cheaper) surface than vellum, parchment, or even papyrus. Europe's earliest paper mills were in Muslim Spain (twelfth century), and Italy's first was established in the early fourteenth century in Fabriano. A watermill worked a trip hammer studded with nails that shredded and pulped rotted linen and hemp rags. Plenty of clear water was essential to cleaning the pulp, so mills were sited upriver from settlements and at spots such as Lake Garda. Pulp was poured into framed wire-mesh screens and pressed to bind fibers and begin drying the wet

sheets. Watermark stamps were applied at this stage. Frames varied in size, but were typically 356 x 483 millimeters, though they could be as large as 470 x 673 millimeters. Dried sheets were bundled and sold wholesale to some presses and retail paper-goods dealers (*cartolerie*).

Printers experimented and developed their own material for moveable type, but all involved lead, antimony, and tin. Type-faces evolved, and some styles became proprietary. At first customers wanted older gothic print that looked like manuscript writing, but new, clearer humanist type-faces developed from ninth-century models. Letters were first carefully drawn and scaled, then carved onto bronze, brass, or steel punches, which was excruciatingly delicate work probably performed by metalsmiths or jewelers. The punch was then hammered into a small copper or lead block, creating a mold or matrix into which the lead-antimony-tin alloy was poured. Removed, trimmed, and polished, the new slug was ready to be set into a frame with hundreds of others. Slugs were stored in cases with many drawers: the capital letters filling the upper drawers and the minuscule, or lower case, the bottom compartments. Since their alloy was relatively soft, slugs had to be recast often; and even punches eventually lost their crispness.

Compositors set type in lines one slug at a time, with blanks as spacers between words. The frame known as the *forme* held lines in place. Once locked, if an error was noticed by a proofreader—the author, publisher, printer, or a paid scholar—the *forme* was unlocked and all type up to the error had to be removed, the error fixed, and then all replaced and the *forme* relocked. Proofing was often done before the *forme* was locked, or more simply a list of errors (*errata*) was attached to the book. Production of cheap editions often skipped the proofing. Compositors were the best paid members of a press crew.

The *forme* was placed in a shallow sliding box beneath the screw press so it was perfectly immovable. A sticky, oil-based ink was carefully applied with a round fabric ball attached to a short handle. Printer's ink had to be specially made since anything too liquid would run off the slugs and anything too thick would clog slugs with fine detail, such as the *e* and *a* in “detail.” A pressman dampened the sheet of paper for better ink absorption, and placed it in a frame above the *forme*. For a large folio edition the large sheet was folded once, giving four printing surfaces, two on each side. Smaller formats meant a more complicated pattern of pages per side of a full sheet: for example, octavo meant two sides with four pages appearing on each. Early on with folio, two *formes* would be prepared and set side by side in the press. For a given sheet, first one page would be applied by turning the press's screw with a long handle and a sharp, quick movement down and then back up. Gracefully he would then switch the *formes* and move the paper to print the second page on the sheet. The process would be repeated many times. After drying, two new *formes* were set in and the sheet's back was printed with the appropriate

pages. By the 1480s a full sheet side could be printed at once. Before 1480 a crew could produce about 1,000 copies of one side of one sheet per day; after, both sides of the same number. A shop needed a good deal of clean space since each sheet needed to be hung to dry after each pressing. Pages were stored to be folded, sewn, and cut—if smaller than a folio or quarto edition—when a standard group of pages, a gathering or fascicle, was ready. Books were wholesaled and retailed as a set of fascicles, which the retailer could have bound at the customer's request.

Patents and Privileges

Patents and privileges (copyrights) were government grants to individuals that protected their rights to their inventions or books. The earliest was Florence's three-year patent in 1421 to Filippo Brunelleschi for his new cargo ship design. In 1469 Venice granted German printer Johann Speyer a five-year monopoly on printing in its jurisdiction; he died three months later. Five years later Venice passed the first patent law, protecting inventors' rights for ten years. The Papacy routinely granted seven-year privileges protecting rights to copy published works; these were, like the papacy, universal, but, like the papacy, all too often ignored.

In Venice, the center of Italian printing, around 1550 there were some 50 shops that hired about 500 men. A single press—the Vatican in 1595 had six—needed a crew of two compositors, one corrector, two pressmen, and one collector who removed and hung the freshly printed pages. Printing was indeed the first mechanization of a complex handicraft: clear and distinct steps, replicability, and mass production of a standardized product.

See also: *Arts:* Antiquity, Cult of; *Prints:* Woodcuts, Engraving, and Etchings; *Economics and Work:* Book Printing and Sales; Guilds; Manufacturing; *Recreation and Social Customs:* News; *Religion and Beliefs:* Bible; Inquisitions; Protestantism; *Science and Technology:* Botany and Botanical Illustration; Libraries; Machines and Engines; Maps and Mapmaking; Technical Illustration; Tools

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SECRETS, BOOKS OF

In Renaissance-era Italy a *segreta* or *segreta* was a recipe, a formula, or a technique that was written down rather than being heard, told, or remembered. A secret's source may have been oral, written in an ancient or recent text, or observed in an experiment by the author. A Book of Secrets, with its hint of esotericism and tantalizing revelation, contained dozens or hundreds of techniques and formulas for activities ranging from magic tricks to curing plague and removing stubborn stains. When they worked, secrets could help people live slightly better lives, and in any case their innately empirical bases in trial and error helped pave the way for a formalized experimental method.

Hellenistic and medieval authors had collected ancient wisdom and methods employed by expert craftsmen and even peasants. A popular fifteenth-century text, *Secret of Secrets*, was attributed to Aristotle, though scholars and its translator, University of Naples professor Francesco Storella, knew it to be fraudulent. The late fifteenth-century ruler of Forlì, Caterina Sforza, collected 454 secrets that she had published in a 553-page book. Print was the key to standardizing and circulating collections, and rising literacy and the burgeoning commercial "print culture" gave rise to a popular demand for self-help literature. Manuals for specific occupations or professions had aided practitioners from painters to pharmacists, and even Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1513) may be seen as a how-to guide for new rulers. Household advice for the commoner appeared in 1525 in the early guide, *A New Work Entitled the House of Secrets*. By 1550, it had seen 12 editions and was the most popular of domestic advice manuals. Its pages provided suggestions for gardening, first aid, and even making translucent paper for windows, as well as recipes for medicines, cosmetics, and soaps. Compilations like this were easily raided and their contents reprinted in smaller pamphlets by mountebanks and peddlers of cheap texts. A single container in Florence's archive contains dozens of such derivative publications, such as *The New Work in Which One Will Find Many Most Beautiful Secrets* (c. 1540).

Mid-century saw the genre's heyday. In 1555 *The Secrets of the Reverend don Alessio Piemontese* appeared. Within four years it underwent 17 editions, and by 1600 it had seen 70 editions and translations into seven languages. Its author

claimed to be a wandering scholar who spoke five languages and had experience in Africa and the Levant. His first edition featured 350 secrets divided roughly into thirds. First was alternative medicine, including remedies for infertility, skin rashes, and 26 for plague, including a recipe requiring dung, a boar's tooth, and puppies boiled alive. The second concerned household matters such as food preservation, cosmetics, stain removers, and scents. The final group was alchemical in nature, without the usual heavy jargon and with applications to common needs. Neapolitan nobleman Giambattista della Porta claimed to have penned his first edition of *Natural Magic* in 1550 at age 15. He published it in Naples in 1558 and came out with an expanded edition in 1585. Della Porta was a serious amateur scientist who supposedly founded a Neapolitan academy whose members conducted all manner of experiments over some ten years. He claimed that many of these found their way into his compendium. Italians divided magic into two types: demonic sorcery, which he avoided, and natural magic. This latter pursued wonders of nature that remained hidden—occult. Della Porta's 20 books (chapters, really) were thematic: Book Six covered counterfeiting gemstones, Seven lodestones and magnetism, Nine women's cosmetics, Twelve gunpowder and other explosives, Fourteen cooking recipes, Seventeen lenses, and Nineteen pneumatic machines. He held his efforts in high regard, targeting an audience of noble people who appreciated empirically tested techniques. His book saw 20 editions and many translations, and Della Porta joined the exclusive Roman Academy of the Linx-eyed (Lincei), of which Galileo was a member, in 1610.

The Secrets of Lady Isabella Cortese (1561) was the only sixteenth-century Book of Secrets attributed to a female author. Some believe it may have been written by one Timoteo Rosella, a hack writer whose very similar *Summa* appeared in the same year. Lady Isabella's collection runs to 420 recipes in four books. In general, they follow earlier patterns, though aimed at a feminine readership. Book One treats medical problems from healing after childbirth to disguising venereal disease sores; Two covers alchemical processes, including transmuting metals into gold and the elusive philosopher's stone in simple language; Three shifts to household and hygiene, including a cure for male impotence involving musk, amber, ants, and quail testicles; and Four, cosmetic recipes for men and women including hair dyes, and treatments for skin, lips, and teeth. In Four, about half apply alchemical processes to various preparations.

Some specifically medical self-help books came from the likes of Pietro Bairo, a professor of Medicine at Turin University; the medical doctor and surgeon Leonardo Fioravanti who published *Medicinal Secrets* and *Medicinal Caprices* in 1561; and Giovanni Battista Zapata, another medical empiric whose *Marvelous Secrets of Medicine and Surgery* appeared in 1577. Girolamo Ruscelli was a courtier and professional writer in Venice who may have penned *Lady Isabella* and did

publish the largely alchemical *New Secrets* in 1567. Together these authors made Books of Secrets one of the period's most popular secular genres and earned for themselves the label Professors of Secrets.

See also: *Arts*: Book Printing and Sales; *Family and Gender*: Health and Illness; *Fashion and Appearance*: Bathing and Personal Hygiene; Cosmetics; Hair and Hairstyles; Laundry; Scents and Perfumes; *Food and Drink*: Drugs; Food Preservation; Literature of Food and Cooking; *Housing and Community*: Plague; Quacks, Charlatans, and Medical Empirics; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Reading; *Science and Technology*: Academies; Alchemy; Collecting and Collections; Metallurgy

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SHIPS AND SHIPBUILDING

Just as Venice ritually wedded itself to the sea each year, so all of Italy was dependent on the Mediterranean for travel, trade, pilgrimage, communication, and as a theater of war. All of this required ships of various sizes and characteristics. The largest of these were probably among the most sophisticated machines Renaissance-era Italians built. They could rely on both human oarsmen and on the wind for power, and evolved across the period in both carrying capacity and the ability to serve as floating platforms for artillery, which itself was undergoing rapid development. By the 1570s a Neapolitan war galley could carry 300 officers, rowers, and marines. Building, outfitting, supplying, and maintaining commercial and naval vessels was a major industry, and Venice's Arsenal state shipyard was perhaps Europe's greatest factory. But most Italian ships were constructed in

other state and private yards in Genoa, Pisa, Livorno, Naples, Messina, Bari, and of course, Venice.

Galleys, or long ships, with both a mast and oars were the mainstay of the Mediterranean merchant and naval fleets. Early on, commercial vessels were the larger and heavier, since space for cargo was at a premium and speed and maneuverability were not priorities. Warships were lighter and faster, with prows designed for ramming and decks from which soldiers or marines could board an enemy ship. Small artillery pieces appeared at the bow and eventually elsewhere, but crossbows long provided the only long-distance weapons. Rowers strained three to a bench and each man to a 30-foot long oar, with 20 to 25 benches (60 to 75 oars) along each side of a typical ship. By the sixteenth century, developments in the sail-driven roundship made it preferable to the commercial great galleys, which were instead fitted out with more and larger artillery for naval purposes. One result was the enormous three-masted and oared galleass, which appeared in Venice in the 1530s. Half a football field long, it carried 250 marines and 70 sailors, and mounted numerous cannon along the sides and both fore and aft.

The roundship was originally a thirteenth-century merchant vessel that was only about twice as long as it was broad, with very high sides and high front and rear decks or castles. It had no oars and relied entirely on wind power. Earlier triangular lateen sails had been replaced by square ones by the early 1300s, and steering by tiller gave way to a proper rudder. The crew needed by a larger fourteenth- or fifteenth-century roundship, the single-masted cog, was half what it had been earlier. But by the mid-1400s Italian shipbuilders increased the size of the cog and added two or more smaller masts that mounted both square and lateen sails, adding to its efficiency and maneuverability. This version was the carrack, which necessarily carried a larger crew than the cog. From the early sixteenth century it was designed to present a row of cannon that could fire broadside, first over the hull railing and then from port-holes in the hull itself below deck. Early Italian galleons date from around 1400 and were rather small ships using both oars and sails on rivers and inland waters of northern Italy. A century later seaworthy galleons without oars but retaining narrow breadth and relatively high sides appeared, but though fast, they were top heavy and less stable. Innovations by the Spanish made them the mainstays of their Atlantic fleets.

In 1400 merchant roundships were rated at about 400 tons; in 1450 the Venetian fleet had six at 600; and by 1500 one was over 1,000 tons. Naval vessels could be far larger: one in 1456 was 2,400 tons, and the official Venetian average was 1,200 to 1,500. The small caravels used by Spanish and Portuguese explorers were rated between 50 and 150 tons.

Private shipyards in the major port cities were able to build and repair most smaller ships, and repair even large ships damaged in battle or storm. Shipwrights operated these yards, contracting with specialists in carpentry, caulking, sail-making, rope-twining, and other necessary crafts. A yard's workers would

begin a ship by laying the keel and see it through to its baptism. The owner would then rig and outfit it as he saw fit. In Venice, the state limited the size of privately constructed vessels to a mere 47 tons.

Venice's state-run Arsenale shipyard covered 110 acres and was surrounded by a 30-foot high wall that stretched 2½ miles. In 1450 alone it built or serviced over 3,000 ships. On average, 4,000 specialist craftsmen worked daily building, repairing, and maintaining Venice's state merchant and naval fleets. Unlike workers in private yards, the *arsenolotti*, both masters and apprentices, performed only their specific tasks on each ship as it moved through the yard in a canal. All necessary tools and materials stayed with the work crews. If anything was carried offsite at day's end, there was a police force to recover goods and punish thieves. The craftsmen were considered very valuable state employees who were entitled to salaries even after they were too old or injured to work. No private yard could match that.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Manufacturing; Trade, Seaborne; *Politics and Warfare*: Navies and Naval Warfare; War in Italy, 1494–1559; War in Italy to 1494; *Science and Technology*: Navigational Tools

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SURGERY

The medical profession was divided into two main fields: internal medicine and surgery. Physicians were concerned with functioning of bodily organs and fluids, while surgeons largely dealt with wounds, the skin, and mechanical problems

of the muscular-skeletal system. Unlike those of other regions of Europe, Italy's medical schools taught both fields, though most practicing surgeons had only a few, if any, formal courses.

Among areas of medical training, surgery was considered least important. Courses included the study of Hippocratic texts and second-century AD Galen's works on such topics as bone-setting, making incisions, and preparing medications such as plasters and clysters. More up-to-date were the encyclopedic works of tenth-century Persians al-Razi and Avicenna on such matters as wounds, sores, and fractures. Other standard texts included the early fourteenth-century *Anatomy* by Mondino and the 1252 *Surgery* of the Paduan Bruno da Longoburgo. Some universities, including Padua's, granted a degree in "surgery" after only a year of medical courses. These incorporated surgical theory, practice, and rudiments of anatomy. Some professors had joint appointments in practical medicine and surgery. Even so, academic surgical positions were relatively few and considered inferior. One of the era's greats was Berengario da Carpi, who taught at Bologna but received little recognition. The University of Pisa tried to get a position in 1488 but from 1496 to the 1540s there is no mention of one. Even Padua's faculty discounted its surgeons, at least until the 1540s.

As in other fields of medicine, surgery benefitted from the contributions of humanists who provided more accurate and printed Classical medical texts and translations, such as Galen's *Method of Healing*, which was printed in Greek in 1500 and in a Latin translation by Italian-trained English physician Thomas Linacre in 1519. Other newly edited and translated Galenic works appeared from the 1520s to 1540s. These had an influence on Italian medicine because Galen, too, had integrated internal medicine and surgery. The study of anatomy, which was so important to surgical practice, also saw advances in the mid-sixteenth century, including better texts and teaching facilities. In some ways the study of anatomy eclipsed that of surgery, though the two really went hand in hand.

One reason for the inferior position of surgeons, both in academia and in society at large, was that most surgeons learned to be effective not in a lecture hall but in practice. Apprenticeship was vital whether one was university trained or not. The practice of surgery was literally hands-on, and training had to be as well. In general, surgery made advances not because of research or academic insights, but because practitioners worked to solve new problems in new ways. In the mid-fourteenth century, French and papal surgeon Guy de Chauliac's *Surgery* embodied an empirical approach to the field. In the sixteenth century ideas circulated via print, and there was much to learn from other non-Italians, such as French military surgeon Ambroise Paré. He and other northerners worked with wounded soldiers, developing not only advanced methods for treating wounds but also in cosmetic surgery and prosthetics.

The use of paid mercenary soldiers in Italy's sixteenth-century wars made recovery from battle wounds an economic as well as a medical issue. The growth in size of armies and expansion of firearms and artillery use—unknown to Classical or medieval authors—meant experimentation in treating them. The earlier technique was commonsensical: remove foreign matter, clean the area, stitch it up, and apply an ointment or balm that would enhance healing. The Arabs had long practiced cauterization to stop bleeding—and incidentally sterilize the area—and in 1514 Giovanni di Vigo explained and popularized the procedure. Both were practiced, and surgeons experimented with and wrote about innovations in suture (stitching) materials and techniques, and new balms to cover the wounds. These were sometimes informed by practitioners in alchemy, who went beyond traditional organic healing compounds.

Wounds leave scars, and the first book on plastic surgery was Gaspare Tagliacozzi's *On Curative Surgery* (1597). The first license for reconstructive surgery—skin grafting—was issued in Sicily in 1432. A common procedure was reconstructing the nose. Typically, specialists cut and transferred a piece of skin from the forehead or cheek. Tagliacozzi learned and practiced the so-called Calabrian method, in which a piece of skin from the inner bicep was only removed partially, the arm braced so the flap was near the face, and the flap applied to the nasal area while still attached to the arm. After two weeks the doctor would begin reshaping the new nose and eventually cut the skin from the arm.

Such a procedure would have been terribly painful, and Tagliacozzi notes that patients went into shock or even got up and ran from the room. He suggested tying them down. There were primitive forms of anesthesia, another area of great concern to surgeons. Opium and alcohol were commonly used; a sponge drenched in a solution of henbane or nightshade, careful doses of mandrake or belladonna, or depression of the carotid artery would also knock a person out.

Autopsies

Autopsy is dissection of a corpse to discover evidence of cause of death. As a process it was identical to academic dissection, though its purpose differed. Hospital surgeons autopsied people who died of trauma or disease, in part to learn how the cause affected the body. Civic surgeons sought cause of death for legal authorities in cases of apparent poisoning, and during the Black Death Pope Clement V ordered a plague victim autopsied to help physicians understand the disease. "Holy autopsies" explored bodies of saintly men and women for "signs of sanctity," including Jesuit founder Ignatius Loyola, Archbishop Charles Borromeo, and three other sixteenth-century cardinals.

Increasingly surgeons became involved in helping women in childbirth, though not as male midwives. Midwives usually relied upon surgeons only in case of complications, but increasingly males attended even normal events. Before 1440 Antonio Guaineri wrote *Treatise on Uteruses*, in which he admitted women were the experts on women's medicine. A decade or so later, Ferrara's physician Michele Savonarola in his *Treatise on Children's and Infant Care* pronounced that he was far above ignorant women and left empiricism and "women's secrets" behind in favor of education and theory. Of course, he was a physician and Guaineri a surgeon.

See also: *Housing and Community*: Barbers and Surgeons; Physicians; *Politics and Warfare*: Soldiers; *Science and Technology*: Alchemy; Anatomy and Dissection; Medical Education; Universities

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TECHNICAL ILLUSTRATION

Technical illustration combined the Renaissance-era's highly refined art of naturalistic drawing with its interests in mathematics, biology, human invention, and education. Technical drawing was above all meant to teach, whether about a structure, process, or product. It was meant to be realistic and accurate and only secondarily aesthetically pleasing.

Three famous sixteenth-century texts exemplify the period's growing appreciation for, and reliance on, technical illustration accompanying written descriptions. *Pirotechnia* (1540) by the Sienese metallurgist and mining engineer Vannoccio Biringuccio is a wide-ranging study of everything metal, from mining to making wires. His first edition included 83 original woodcuts. German Georgius Agricola published *De*

re metallica (*On Metal Matters*) in Venice in 1556. It had to be done posthumously, as when he died he was still awaiting the 289 woodcuts illustrating his text. These are highly detailed, sometimes showing multiple processes semi-naturalistically, making connections through cut-aways and careful perspective. Most famous was surgeon Andrea Vesalius's *On the Fabric of the Human Body*, published in Venice in 1542, discussed earlier in the entry "Anatomy and Dissection."

In 1554, Filippo Orsoni, a designer at the court of Mantua, produced a manuscript album of designs for fancy armor, equestrian trappings, and 39 sword hilts. It features 306 yellow-tinted ink drawings in very fine detail. This was neither a catalogue nor a fantasy, as his commentary for each includes notes on how to create it, whether it remained in fashion, and potential problems. Though no exact realizations of his designs exist, a few sword hilt designs come very close and are similar in complexity and ornateness.

Carefully structured human movement was a perfect field for technical illustration. Numerous printed books of fencing, for example, included fine sketches. The first important work was *A New Work by Achille Marozzo of Bologna* (1535), which contains 82 woodcuts of the handling of both military and civilian weapons. His was also the first to use a floor diagram that located the figures' feet on a surface. In 1553, the Milanese engineer and architect Camillo Agrippa applied his technical visualization to the art. The frontispiece to his *Treatise on the Science of Arms* shows him and intellectual companions in conversation among such scientific objects as an armillary sphere, globe, hourglass, dividers, and books,

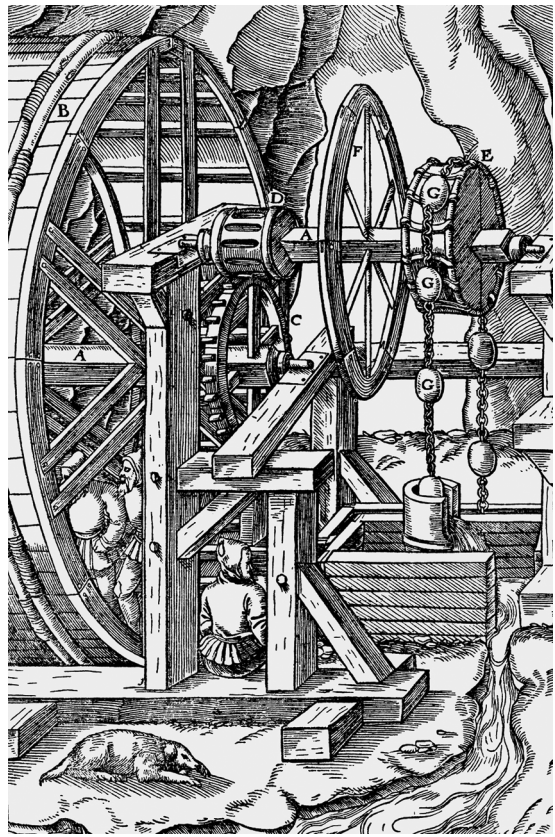


Image of *Wheel Turned by Treading*, plate 16 of *De re metallica* (*On the nature of metals*, 1556) by the German Georgius Agricola (Georg Bauer, 1494–1555). Note the men inside the wheel whose walking action—treading—is powering the wheel. The clarity and fine detail are typical of the book's many woodcuts. (Buyenlarge/Getty Image)

along with a rapier and dagger: this was to be a scientific treatment of the art of fencing. Some of his frames contain up to four figures, meant to show four separate moments in a single complex action. Other illustrations link the text to figures by labeling points with letters and using these in his accompanying text, much as geometry lessons did (and do). His figures operate in a world of geometric shapes, as, for example, circles appear to exemplify the rotation of the torso, shoulder, and wrist. More than sequences of steps, his illustrations show the principles underlying the perfected form of human movement. In his unpublished *Discourse on the Art of Fencing* (c. 1555), Camillo Palladini of Bologna, a fencing master, provided 46 figures of nude male fencers beautifully sketched in red chalk.

Botanical illustration was a special case. Artists had long painted the beauty of generic plants and trees, but naturalistic depiction of specific species emerged only in the later fifteenth century. Less than a century later, naturalist Gherardo Cibo had collected and illustrated thousands of plants, though he never published his catalogue. His drawings placed plants in their landscapes and included people to provide scale and interest. In 1577, painter Jacopo Ligozzi of Verona entered the service of Francesco I de' Medici in Florence. He created remarkable images of plants including exotic imports such as pineapples, American century plants, and morning glories. He used a subtle palette and multiple transparent layers of color to achieve deep coloration and minute details. His paintings included birds and even insects associated with the specific plants. Some botanical catalogues contained actual dried flowers and leaves pressed onto pages. Well-drawn and painted images were considered superior, however, since they captured the true colors and even textures of the living plants. Also, pictures could include all parts of a plant from top to taproot, different angles of flowers, and points in cycles of growth. For sixteenth-century German botanist Leonhart Fuchs, accurate images helped the real plant remain in one's memory, adding an experiential element to the written text.

See also: *Arts:* Daily Life in Art; Painters and Their Workshops; Perspective in the Visual Arts; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Economics and Work:* Book Printing and Sales; Construction, Building; Manufacturing; *Fashion and Appearance:* Art, Fashion in; Tailors and Seamstresses; *Politics and Warfare:* Arms and Armor; Fortresses and Fortifications; *Science and Technology:* Anatomy and Dissection; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Collecting and Collections; Machines and Engines; Maps and Mapmaking; Ships and Shipbuilding; Tools

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TIMEKEEPING

The beginning of the Renaissance era coincides with the invention of the mechanical hour. The division of the day into 24 hours long predates our period. When God created the universe, He divided day and night into equal halves, which is why people of the time pointed to the spring equinox as the day of creation. This meant that there was an equal number of daylight and nighttime hours, 12 of each. The problem was that except twice per year, the days' daylight is progressively longer, then progressively shorter. By the summer solstice, the 12 daylight hours were considerably longer than the 12 nighttime hours, and the opposite was true by the winter solstice.

For most people this really did not present a problem, as they simply worked during the daylight hours that God provided. In the mid-fourteenth century urban workers usually rose when the local church bell or another large bell rang out. Monastery bells rang several times each day to gather the monks or nuns for prayer. Astronomically astute brothers could tell by the position of the sun when it was

time for the next service. Several instruments had been developed for determining the hour, but each had its problems. One was to calibrate a candle so that the slow burning of the wick indicated the passage of time. But candles were expensive, and both wax and wicks were inconsistent. Astrolabes were used as time-telling devices, but these were expensive and took training to read. A simple gnomon, or short rod, stuck in the ground could tell the experienced reader the time by its shadow: no shadow meant noon. Of course, no shadow could also mean clouds or night. This was also the problem with calibrated sundials, which continued in use throughout the Renaissance era.

An hour glass or sand-glass will always empty at a constant rate and empty completely in the same amount of time each time. This made it very useful at sea on a tossing deck, but it was also one of the devices that made possible the constant hour, or mechanical hour, of 60 equal minutes. Assuming it was calibrated to one modern hour, if one turned the glass precisely at noon, and then 23 more times, at each moment it emptied, then a gnomon or sundial should show about one minute's difference from high noon. The season would determine whether it was a minute before or a minute after. Twenty-four turns, 24 hours. The hour was now an artificial construct rather than a natural factor. God created the day and night, but humans created the constant hour.

The invention of the mechanical clock was the other, and in some ways more monumental, determiner of the constant hour and eventually minute. Clocks started out very large and shrank down to pocket size only during the sixteenth century. The first clock mechanisms seem to have been developed to ring large bells at given intervals, rather than to provide a display of the time. Bells came first, faces and hands later. These worked by hanging a weight and a counterweight from a cord that was attached to and wrapped around an axle. Allowed to fall freely, the cord would unwind and the axle simply spin in place. The trick was to add a ratchet system that would arrest the drop in equal periods, the click-click-click of old-fashioned cuckoo clocks. By adding gears, the rotation was transferred to the striking mechanism and later to the clock hour hand that moved around the clock face. Clearly this would not work unless one had ample vertical space for the weight to drop, as in a church or city hall tower or a tall grandfather's clock. Once the mechanical clock caught on, however, innovations followed in quick order. An important one was replacing the falling weight with a slowly uncoiling steel spring that provided the energy needed. Springs could be made small and inserted into mechanisms that could be carried about. The jostling did affect the movement of the mechanism, but these early watches could be reset easily from more reliable wall or tower clocks. In any case, the spring had to be retightened by winding with a key after rather short intervals. An owner was likely to wind it when he or she reset it.

Public clocks appeared in Italian town hall towers from at least 1336 (Milan). Milan was known as a center of fine metalwork, including weapons and armor, and these skills lent themselves to fashioning the components of early clockworks. The city of Monza bought a clock from Milanese craftsmen in 1347, and in 1354 Genoa displayed the first 24-hour clock, also ordered from a Milanese workshop. Between 1340 and 1350 clocks were installed in Padua, Vicenza, Trieste, Florence, Siena, and Bologna. Like city halls and cathedrals, public clocks were matters of civic pride, and some were equipped with German-style moving automaton figures of saints, angels, or musicians for the delight of onlookers.

Monitoring, maintaining, and repairing these huge mechanisms was sometimes a full-time job. One truism about clocks is that they unfairly mechanized the workday. Evidence, however, seems to indicate that workers and employers appreciated the ability to count equal hours, and pay, or be paid, accordingly. The winter's "shorter hours" and summer's "longer hours" no longer applied. As for peasants, they worked as long as they could see to do so; and monks kept God's time.

See also: *Economics and Work:* Manufacturing; *Politics and Warfare:* City Hall; *Recreation and Social Customs:* Calendars: Sacred and Profane; *Religion and Beliefs:* Monks and Monasteries; Saints and Their Cults; *Science and Technology:* Astronomy before Copernicus; Machines and Engines; Navigational Tools; Tools

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TOOLS

Tools are objects used by people to accomplish tasks that they cannot accomplish without the use of the object, or some other similar object. A machine is a complex tool that converts some type of nonhuman or animal energy into another form of energy to accomplish a task. This entry considers tools that were used manually—by

hand—rather than relying on wind, solar, animal, heat, water, or other nonhuman energy source. The examples used are only a few of the multitude of objects that Renaissance-era Italians put to work creating or repairing their world.

The Italian craft tradition was beginning to privilege high-quality work as the Renaissance began. Because it was a commercial society, much of the production of tools was for a market, and not merely for oneself. This meant not only that purchasers could demand high quality, but that competition drove quality up as well. And for the Renaissance-era customer, quality came to mean not only durability, but also other characteristics, such as balance, ease of use, and even beauty. Surgeons' tools came to look and feel less like carpenters' equipment and more like fine cutlery, which was itself in its infancy. Bone or even ivory handles replaced wood, and delicate incising or molded scrollwork decorated surfaces. Beautiful tools signaled a fine workman. Papal chef Bartolomeo Scappi provided a wealth of information about the culinary arts in his book *Works [Opera] on the Art of Cooking* (1570). Of course the cook is an artist, and the fine artist needed fine tools. In addition to verbal descriptions of dozens of such tools, his book contains illustrations of both kitchen layouts and individual instruments cooks used (or dreamed of). The kitchen was a workshop, and like any workshop it was the space within which the panoply of tools was stored, laid out, and put to use. Many of his tools are quite beautiful, as befitted perhaps the most important kitchen in Italy, while others were purely utilitarian. Beauty was no substitute for usefulness.

The painter's brush was a bundle of animal hairs attached to the end of a handle. The bristle ends were trimmed to fit a particular need the artist might have. Some were sharply pointed, others gently rounded, and still others were nearly flat across. Some were quite broad for large areas, others nearly as fine as a needle-point. As Cennino Cennini laid out in his artist's manual, different animals' hairs were most appropriate to particular tasks and types of paints. As painting became more varied and complex, the painter's tools multiplied in number and form. We know that a painter's shop would purchase some brushes readymade, while the same painter also purchased quantities of loose bristles, presumably to make or repair his own, as outlined by Cennini around 1415. A painter who worked on walls, panels, and miniatures might have dozens of brushes, no two of which were alike. None of these would have been engraved or ivory-handled, in part because no one else saw them, in part because the painter did not work in the papal kitchen. The same principles would have held for the toolkits of most craftsmen. The carpenter and the sculptor used different sizes and types of chisels and hammers and, on one project, might have used several types of both as needed.

Other tools were not used on substances, but for other purposes. Eyeglasses had been in use since before the Renaissance, but rarely appear in images unless the wearer is a jeweler, accountant, notary, or other worker whose keen sight is

necessary to his work. Navigational tools such as the quadrant, cross-staff, and astrolabe, which were used for time-telling, were essentially devices for measuring, allowing the eye to determine precise spatial relationships it could not otherwise. Maps served similar purposes, though of a geographic rather than temporal nature. More generally, printed books and other printed materials were tools for storing and presenting information, greatly accelerating the dissemination of the written word and useful images. Scappi could hardly have communicated with the number and variety of readers that he did had not the printing press come into common use. Importantly, Scappi's use of illustrations paralleled that of dozens of Italian craftsmen and engineers. Essentially technical illustrations, they conveyed a great deal of visual information in scaled and realistic forms. Viewers instantly understood what the author or illustrator was trying to convey, allowing them to adopt or adapt what they saw to their own needs. This meant that technology spread beyond the workshop into the world at large, and not only the literate world.

The Pope's Obelisk

In August 1585, Pope Sixtus V decided to move a 400-ton Egyptian obelisk to its current position in St. Peter's Piazza. Engineer Domenico Fontana won the contract and oversaw the creation of a huge vertical wooden frame within which it would be raised straight up, lowered 90 degrees to horizontal, then moved over 700 yards and re-erected. The process involved hundreds of men and horses; thousands watched, threatened with death for interfering. Four and a half months after first movement it was in place, thanks to cables, pulleys, gears, winches, windlasses, human and animal power, and supreme organization.

As a tool, the printing press was one of the most important and transformative inventions of the era. The cider screw press from which it was derived had turned apples to juice, but the printing press took rag paper and sticky ink and revolutionized communication. Other similarly complex tools included weavers' looms, power looms, and one rig that consisted of two dozen looms operated by a single person. Leonardo da Vinci drew a sketch of a small device that used a manually operated clock-like mechanism to move a very sharply edged hammer ahead a tiny distance with each click. At each move it fell on a flat bar, leaving a small but significant dent parallel to the previous dents. When finished, one had freshly and very precisely made file. Could the unaided human hand have done as well?

See also: *Arts:* Painters and Their Workshops; Prints: Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings; *Economics and Work:* Manufacturing; *Food and Drink:* Tools for

Cooking and Eating; *Politics and Warfare*: Arms and Armor; *Science and Technology*: Academies; Agriculture and Agronomy; Alchemy; Astronomy before Copernicus; Machines and Engines; Maps and Mapmaking; Navigational Tools; Printing; Surgery; Technical Illustration

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UNIVERSITIES

The university was a medieval invention, and before the Black Death Italy hosted seven. All remained in operation through the Renaissance era, and eight more were founded by 1600. Because universities awarded licenses to teach and had other privileges, they had to be chartered by either an emperor or a pope. They were administered, however, by the local ruler or commune, and were considered an important source of local pride. Curricula were surprisingly traditional, as were reading lists and techniques of teaching. At the heart was scholasticism, which privileged logic and debate in seeking answers to questions or deciding between competing proposed answers. In Italy the traditional liberal arts, especially the quadrivium, gave way to the humanities, more narrowly focused on Classical authors, and philosophy, including ethics and natural philosophy, as expressed by Classical authorities. Medical study was linked to the arts curriculum and faculty, as were most theology courses. Law schools, usually teaching both canon and civil law, usually stood separately. Doctoral degrees in medicine and philosophy were not uncommon, but lawyers walked away with one or both legal credentials.

Unlike northern European universities, Italian ones granted only licenses and doctorate degrees. Many students attended for years and never took a degree. Wealthy or noble students did not really need it to advance in the world, and



Bas relief carving of Bolognese students that captures the rambunctious energy of adolescence. Students might enter the university as young as 15 or 16. (DEA/G. DAGLI ORTI/De Agostini/Getty Images)

poorer students often ran short of funds. Beloved professors retired or died and their students wandered away. Institutions were closed due to strikes, plague, economic crises, or war. In 1472 Lorenzo de' Medici stripped Florence's *studio* of much of its faculty, including law and medicine, and sent them to Pisa, then part of the Florentine state. When supportive rulers died in a duchy such as Ferrara or the Neapolitan Kingdom, doors closed and students and faculty scattered. Students often studied at several schools before stopping or gaining their degrees. Florentine historian Francesco Guicciardini spent seven years studying law at Pisa, Ferrara, and Padua before graduating. He tells us his father spent about 500 ducats on his son's education.

Costs varied, and well-off students always lived better than poorer ones. Beside university expenses students had to pay for room and board or for food and drink. Entertainment could be simple or expensive, such as trips to bordellos or gambling. Heavy drinkers haunted wine bars and taverns, and then there were the

finer for crimes from blasphemy to property damage or assault. Rent might pay for part of a large residence, a room in an inn or widow's house, or a hovel. Some lived with their professors, and young clerics studying theology resided with brethren. Expenses included firewood, candles, laundry, clothes, books (much cheaper with printing), ink, paper, and travel between terms. Students living together often had one or more servants to cook and clean, often older women. Students could make some money tutoring foreigners in Italian, teaching Latin school, performing music, copying texts (at least before printing), and doing odd jobs for wealthy students or faculty.

Unlike northern European university students, Italians began study at about age 18 instead of 15. Guicciardini's seven years was about average for the successful Italian student. Northern European universities often had special residential colleges or other facilities for their less mature students, where the older Italians had to fend for themselves. The Catholic Reformation's emphasis on education changed this pattern somewhat, as residential colleges appeared at many universities. Between 1543 and 1604 the Medici dukes and two cardinals founded four small residential colleges in Pisa. As in the north, some colleges were for students from foreign countries such as Germany, England, France, or Spain. The high quality of some Italian universities drew foreign students, especially for law or medicine. The Protestant Reformation created issues for many from northern Germany, France, and England, as some universities required adherence to Catholicism. Venice's university at Padua reflected Venice's religious liberalism, and here few questions were asked. Later sixteenth-century Bologna and Siena, resenting control from orthodox Rome and Florence, respectively, also placed few barriers to Protestants.

Unlike northern European faculty, Italian professors were not clergy but married laymen. They, of course, had come through the university experience as students, and the vast majority were Italians. Some sought high reputations and published a good deal, much easier after the advent of printing. Others were satisfied to meet their teaching obligations. Salaries tended to reflect the teaching loads of hours and students. Typically "ordinary" hour-long classes met regularly on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, in both the morning and afternoon. Thursdays and holidays (holy days) featured special—extraordinary—lectures by advanced students or visiting professors. The academic year ran from late October to late June. With breaks at Christmas, Carnival, and Easter, and ample single religious holidays, the year had about 135 ordinary and 45 extraordinary class days. In the classroom Italian faculty had moved beyond merely reading texts and adding dry commentary. Successful teachers dynamically engaged assigned texts modeling questions and responses that students were expected to emulate. Scholastic debate or disputation remained at the heart of education, and

Major Italian Universities during the Renaissance Era

<i>University</i>	<i>Year Founded</i>	<i>Faculty in 1430s</i>	<i>Faculty in Later 1500s</i>	<i>Students in Later 1500s</i>	<i>Authority in 1500s</i>
Bologna	1198 (Papal)	73	80–85	c. 2,000	Papacy
Padua	1222	30	44–49	c. 1,000–1,500	Venice
Naples	1224	10 (?)	13 to 19	c. 500	Spanish viceroy
Siena	1246	22	52 to 1,589	c. 500	Commune/Florence
Rome	1240s/1430s	A few	37	c. 750	Papacy
Perugia	1308	35	41	c. 200–300	Commune/Papacy
Pisa	1343	Closed 1406–73	45	c. 600	Florence
Florence	1348	27	Closed 1472–		Commune/Duke
Pavia	1361	44	47–50	c. 350 in 1546	Milan
Turin	1411/13	8	30	c. 400–500	Duke Piedmont-Savoy
Ferrara	1442		45–50	c. 400–500	Duke
Catania	1445		12	186 in 1579	Spanish viceroy
Macerata	1541		7–12	c. 230	Commune
Salerno	c. 1592		9	c. 100–200	Commune

Source: Grendler, Paul F. *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, passim.

that was displayed by successful candidates for graduation and in weekly “circular disputations” in which professor and students sat in a *piazza* publicly debating and clarifying the previous week’s work.

See also: *Economics and Work*: Book Printing and Sales; *Fashion and Appearance*: Social Status and Clothing; *Housing and Community*: Physicians; *Politics and Warfare*: Ambassadors and Diplomacy; Civic Magistracies and Offices; *Recreation and Social Customs*: Taverns and Inns; *Religion and Beliefs*: Protestantism; *Science and Technology*: Anatomy and Dissection; Astrology; Astronomy before Copernicus; Botany and Botanical Illustration; Libraries; Medical Education; Pharmacopeias and *Materia Medica*; Surgery

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Primary Documents

ARTS

The Artist as a Young Man: Cennino Cennini. "Vocational Advice to a Budding Painter." *Craftsman's Handbook* [*Il Libro dell'arte*] (c. 1410)

Cennino Cennini's (c. 1360–c. 1427) Craftsman's Handbook, Il Libro dell'arte, provides a unique look into the early Renaissance artist's workshop. It is filled with information on tools, techniques, and materials employed not only by painters but also by those working with mosaics, glass, and even plaster casting. Workshop masters were teachers, and Cennini begins by addressing the student as one fresh to the field, as he himself once was. As throughout his work, his advice is practical if not subtle.

I, Cennino, the son of Andrea Cennini of Colle di Val d'Elsa,—(I was trained in this profession for twelve years by my master, Agnolo Gaddi of Florence, who learned it from Taddeo, his father; and his father was christened under Giotto, and was his follower for four-and-twenty years; and that Giotto changed the profession of painting from Greek [Byzantine] back into Latin, and brought it back up to date; and he had more finished craftsmanship than anyone has had since),—to minister to all those who want to enter the profession, I will make note of what was taught me by the aforesaid Agnolo, my master, and of what I have tried out with my own hand; first invoking High Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, then that most delightful advocate of all sinners, Virgin Mary; and of St. Luke the Evangelist the first Christian painter . . . AMEN

It is not without the impulse of a lofty spirit that some are moved to enter this profession, attractive to them through natural enthusiasm. Their intellect will take

delight in drawing, provided their nature attracts them to it of themselves, without any master's guidance, out of loftiness of spirit. And then, through this delight, they come to want to find a master; and they bind themselves to him with respect for authority, undergoing an apprenticeship in order to achieve perfection in all this. There are those who pursue it because of poverty and domestic need, for profit and enthusiasm for the profession too; but above all these are to be extolled the ones who enter the profession through a sense of enthusiasm and exaltation.

You, therefore, who with lofty spirit are fired with this ambition, and are about to enter the profession, begin by decking yourselves with this attire: Enthusiasm, Reverence, Obedience, and Constancy. And begin to submit yourself to the direction of a master for instruction as early as you can; and do not leave the master until you have to. . . .

Now you must forge ahead again, so that you may pursue the course of this theory [of drawing]. You have made your tinted papers; the next thing is to draw. You should adopt this method. Having first practiced drawing for a while as I have taught you above, that is, on a little panel, take pains and pleasure in constantly copying the best things that you can find done by the hand of great masters. And if you are in a place where many good masters have been, so much the better for you. But I give you this advice: take care to select the best one every time, and the one who has the greatest reputation. And, as you go on from day to day, it will be against nature if you do not get some grasp of his style and of his spirit. For if you undertake to copy after one master today and another tomorrow, you will not acquire the style of either one or the other, and you will inevitably, through enthusiasm, become capricious, because each style will be distracting your mind. You will try to work in this man's way today, and in the other's tomorrow, and so you will not get either of them right. If you follow the course of one man through constant practice, your intelligence would have to be crude indeed for you not to get some nourishment from it. Then you will find, if nature has granted you any imagination at all, that you will eventually acquire a style individual to yourself, and it cannot help being good; because your hand and your mind, being always accustomed to gather flowers, would ill know how to pluck thorns.

Mind you, the most perfect steersman that you can have, and the best helm, lie in the triumphal gateway of copying from nature. And this outdoes all other models; and always rely on this with a stout heart, especially as you begin to gain some judgment in draftsmanship. Do not fail, as you go on, to draw something every day, for no matter how little it is it will be well worth while, and will do you a world of good.

Your life should always be arranged just as if you were studying theology, or philosophy, or other theories, that is to say, eating and drinking moderately, at least twice a day, electing digestible wholesome dishes and light wines; saving and

sparing your hand, preserving it from such strains as heaving stones, crowbars, and many other things that are bad for your hand, from giving them a chance to weary it. There is another cause which, if you indulge it, can make your hand so unsteady that it will waver more, and flutter far more than leaves do in the wind, and this is indulging too much in the company of woman. Let us get back to our subject . . . always go out alone, or in such company as will be inclined to do as you do, and not apt to disturb you. And the more understanding this company displays, the better it is for you. When you are in churches or chapels, and beginning to draw, consider, in the first place, from what section you think you wish to copy a scene or figure. . . .

Source: Cennini, Cennino d'Andrea. *The Craftsman's Handbook*. Translated by Daniel V. Thompson, Jr. New York: Dover Books, 1954, pp. 2, 3, 14–17. Reprinted by permission of Dover Publications, Inc.

THE RENAISSANCE STAGE: SEBASTIANO SERLIO. “A VENETIAN ARCHITECT ON DESIGNING STAGE SCENERY.” *SECOND BOOK OF ARCHITECTURE* (1545)

Sebastiano Serlio (1475–1554) was a major architect in the Veneto. He was heavily influenced by the era's classicism, and was especially dependent on the first-century BC Roman architect Vitruvius, whose works had been recently edited and printed. The goal of Serlio and other architects was to adapt Vitruvius's outdoor theater to an interior hall. The one he built and mentions is not the later Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza, but actually a kind of lecture hall apparently used for performances. The day's plays followed the classical unity of time and place, so sets did not move during the performance. The many ellipses in the document that follows represent omission of either technical points or references to engravings that were embedded in Serlio's text.

Among all things made by hand of man few in my opinion bring greater contentment to the eye and satisfaction to the spirit than the unveiling to our view of a stage setting. Here the art of perspective gives us in a little space a view of superb palaces, vast temples, and houses of all kinds, and, both near and far, spacious squares surrounded by various ornate buildings. There are long vistas of avenues with intersecting streets, triumphal arches, soaring columns, pyramids, obelisks, and a thousand other marvels, all enriched by innumerable lights (large, medium, small, according to their position), at times so skillfully placed that they seem like so many sparkling jewels—diamonds, rubies, sapphires, emeralds and other gems.

Here the horned and lucent moon rises slowly—so slowly that the spectators have not been aware of any movement. In other scenes the sun rises, moves on its course, and at the end of the play is made to set with such skill that many spectators remain lost in wonder. With like skill gods are made to descend from the skies and planets to pass through the air. Then there are presented diverse *intermezzi*, richly staged, in which performers appear dressed in various sorts of strange costumes both to execute morris [“Moorish” or imagined Islamic] dances and play music. Sometimes one sees strange animal costumes worn by men and children who play, leap and run, to the delighted wonder of the spectators. All these things are so satisfying to the eye and the spirit that nothing made by the art of man could seem more beautiful.

Since we are dealing with the art of perspective, I will proceed with the subject further. The general art of perspective we have hitherto considered was concerned with flat planes parallel to the front, while this second perspective method is concerned with plastic scenes [angled] in relief. Obviously the latter must follow different rules. First of all it is usual to begin the platform at eye level; from front to back this is raised a ninth part, i.e., the depth is divided into nine parts and the stage raised at the back as much as one of these parts. The platform must be made very even and strong to accommodate the dancers.

This slope of the platform I have found from experience to be effective. For in Vicenza, the richest and proudest of cities among the cities of Italy, I built an auditorium and stage of wood, perhaps—nay, without doubt—the largest erected in our times, where for the marvelous *intermezzi* that were presented there, introducing chariots, elephants and diverse morris dances, I built in front of the sloping stage a level floor, the depth of which was 12 feet and the width 60 feet. This I found to be both convenient and effective. As this front platform was level, the floor was marked out with perfect squares (not in perspective), but on the sloping platform the squares diminished as they approached the horizon.

The scenes for plays are of three kinds: Comic, Tragic, and Satyrical. . . . [T]he Comic scene has houses appropriate to private persons, as citizens, lawyers, merchants, parasites, and other similar persons. Above all the scene should have its house of the procuress [whorehouse], its tavern, and its church. I have already shown how these houses are placed in position, and I now discuss the details of their construction. . . . The balconies . . . give an excellent effect on the perspective faces, as do the cornices whose ends, cut on the inside, form projecting corners on the houses. . . . Above all else one must select some smaller buildings to be placed in front, so that over their roofs the other buildings may be seen. . . . The superior height of the buildings in back gives the appearance of grandeur, and better completes the scene in that part. . . . In [the Tragic] setting

the houses must be those of great persons, because amorous adventures, sudden accidents, and violent and cruel deaths such as we read of in ancient and modern tragedies alike have always taken place in the houses of lords, dukes, grand princes, and particularly kings. Therefore, as I have said, you must introduce here none but stately houses. . . .

The Satyric scene is used for the Satyric plays, in which all those who live licentiously are reprov'd and even castigat'd. In ancient satyr plays lines were spoken that referred, almost without respect to persons, to certain men in the community known to live evil and vicious lives. Such license, however, as one may readily comprehend, would be conceded only to people who could speak without respect for ranks—namely rustics. Hence, Vitruvius, in dealing with scenery, recommends that these scenes be composed of trees, rocks, hills, mountains, herbs, flowers, and fountains—together with some rustic huts, such as those in the illustration. And since in our time these performances are generally given in the winter when few trees and bushes have flowers and foliage, these will have to be made artificially of silk, and will receive more praise than the natural objects themselves. Just as in the comic and tragic scenes houses and other buildings are to be imitated by the art of painting, so in this too, imitation is to be made of trees and bushes with flowers.

The more costly these things are, the more they are worthy of praise, because in truth they then express the generosity of rich lords and their enmity to ugly stinginess.

Source: Gassner, John, and Ralph Allen, eds. *Theatre and Drama in the Making: Antiquity to the Renaissance*. Rev. ed. New York: Applause Books, 1992, pp. 238–239, 242, 243, 244. Reprinted by permission of Applause Theatre Book Publishers.

ECONOMICS AND WORK

Tuscan Landlords and Peasants: A Mezzadria Contract from Lucca (c. 1350) and a Landowner's Memorandum (c. 1410)

Tuscany was the origin of Italian mezzadria farming and of personal record-keeping in the early Renaissance era. The contract reproduced here is uncharacteristically long—10 years—but typical in its legal descriptions of property and the duties of each party. In the second document reproduced here, a private memorandum, the anonymous landowner documents his sharecropper's payment, as well as the sharecropper's misdeeds and their satisfactory outcome.

Document 1: Mezzadria Contract

In the name of God, Amen. Bernardo, son of the late Vannello Asquini, citizen of Lucca, of the quarter of Saints Simon and Jude, has let and granted to Dino of the late Collucio, called Ortica, of the commune of Capella San Bartolomeo, of the parish of Massa Pisana, a piece of land with vines, with a house with an attic with olive and fig and other fruit trees, and with an “hall” and a well, situated in the confines of the territory of the said commune of San Bartolomeo . . . at the place called “by the chestnut trees” bounded on one side by the land of Lemmo da Portico of Lucca, on the other by the land and house of Bartolomeo, son of the late Ugolino, of the late Master Bartolomeo of Lucca, on the other by the public way and on the other by the land of the Asquini sons. Item another piece of land partly olive grove, partly woodland, situated within the confines and territory of the commune San Giovanni de Scheto, in the same parish, bounded on the one side by the land of the Asquini sons, on the other by the land of Pietro Paganelli of Lucca, on the other side by the working land of San Giovanni Maggiore of Lucca, on the other by the monastery of San Giorgio of Lucca, on the other by the public way, and the place “by the quarry” or “by the chestnut trees.” Item he has let and granted to the said Dino, with the said lands the following equipment: a jar containing about 104 setiers of wine, a cask containing about 36 setiers of wine, a small jar containing about 12 setiers of wine, a wicker basket containing about 24 setiers of grain, all of which are in the said house. For these lands and pieces of land to plow well, to improve and not wittingly to allow to deteriorate, and these things and equipment to use in good faith without their deteriorating, after the next first day of October, for the next ten years.

And the said Dino, cultivator, has promised in exchange faithfully to plow, manure, and sow the said pieces of land that are arable, at the desired time and at his expense. To plow, hoe, dress, and tie that which is vineyard, while providing expense, labor, ties, props, and to renew and layer this vineyard every time it shall be useful. To keep the hedges and ditches in good condition. Not to cut the chestnut, olive, and fruit trees without the permission of Bernardo, the lessor, or his heirs. . . . To harvest the grain, gather and press the grapes, pick the olives, chestnuts and fruits at the desired time. To give, deliver, and carry the half of all these fruits, grain, wine, oil, chestnuts, figs, and other fruits of the said lands . . . in good faith and at his expense to the said Bernardo and his heirs. . . . And to resign the said things and equipment in the said house, in the state in which they were to the said Bernardo and his heirs at the end of the aforementioned term.

Document 2: Angry Florentine Landowner’s Memorandum

The farm of Macia Lunga. . . . On 16 July [sharecropper] Chele [kay-leh] sent me for our share of the crop 14½ bushels of grain, the bushel was then worth 25 soldi; in all 18 lire and 15 soldi.

And then, that which I have had from him in restitution of the things he took from me so often. That is, my share of a pig that he sold without telling me, and which was for half shares, and the reeds that he sold for two years and the wood he sold without telling me. Furthermore, for the grain: he did not sow his share for two years, which went for half shares, and he did not sow what I gave him for my share, or hardly. And furthermore, for the share of a pig he kept: my share was not sent. Then for the acorns harvested that were given to the pig and sheep kept by him and nothing to me. And afterwards, for the straw that he carried off to his house. And in addition, for two pieces of plow timber that he took from me, and the trunk of a tree of three spans [length]. Further, for many stakes that he made at home, and then sold to others. Further, for many stakes he carried away and that he bought at Cerracchio. And then for the beans he sowed and that he ate and harvested without giving me any. Then, for much of my iron that he took away from the house. And then, as reparation for the grain that he stole from me when he harvested and hid the sheaves in the wood, here and there, and we found it in various places, as Fruosino di Donato and Mona Nanna, his wife, whom I found going by the wood pasturing his oxen, saw him. There was also the sister of Agnolo di Nanni di Castruccio. We were aware the first time that Chele and Monna Bella, his wife and all his family came there late one night; and Martino and Andrea, who went by the fields, saw them leaving that place and, they calling me, we caught them; and then suspecting a greater injury we searched and found it hidden there in several different places. Realizing this wickedness, I chased him. Wishing to bring me to reason, he begged ser Payolo, our priest, Lolo and Marcoccio, and other neighbors, after having heard more of this wickedness, to be so kind as to arrange the matter. About all of which in the end I satisfied myself, and, after much talking, they learned from said Chele how he has taken all of the things aforementioned, of which he made restitution to me. . . .

Source: Duby, Georges. *Rural Economy and Country Life in the Medieval West*. Translated by Cynthia Postan. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1968, pp. 539–41.

THE MERCHANT'S INVENTORY: LUCA PACIOLI. "WHAT AN INVENTORY IS AND HOW TO MAKE IT." *THE RULES OF DOUBLE-ENTRY BOOKKEEPING: PARTICULARIS DE COMPUTIS ET SCRIPTURIS* (1494)

Inventories of people's goods are among the historians' most valuable sources. Most surviving inventories listed and valued recently deceased people's goods, cash, and property—probate inventory—protecting the estate's heirs. New partners made business inventories noting who contributed what; and buyers inventoried their newly purchased business to determine exactly what they

now owned. In 1494, professor of mathematics at the University of Perugia, Luca Pacioli (1446–1517), composed the first (and enormously successful) book on double-entry bookkeeping, a matter of both merchant practice and mathematics. Chapters Two and Three appear next, directing the merchant to begin by listing everything he owns and how to go about it. The result is a template for every kind of personal inventory.

Luca Pacioli, “What an Inventory Is and How to Make It.” (Venice, 1494)

Therefore, the merchant should begin business with the name of God at the beginning of every book and have His Holy Name in his mind. To begin with, the merchant must make his inventory (*inventorio*) in this way: he must always put down on a sheet of paper or in a separate book whatever he has in this world. This whole inventory must be completed in one day; otherwise there will be trouble in the future in the management of the business.

Example of an Inventory with All Its Formal Requirements

In the name of God, November 8th, 1493, Venice.

The following is the inventory of myself, N.N., of Venice, Street of the Holy Apostles.

I have written down systematically or had written by Mr. So-and-So, this inventory of all my property, personal and real, what is owed to me and what is owed by me of which I on this said day find myself possessed in this world.

First Item: First I find myself possessed of cash, in gold and coin of so many ducats, of which so many are Venetian, and so many gold Hungarians; of so many Papal, Sienese and Florentine, etc., large florins. The rest consists of many different kinds of silver and copper coins, i.e., *troni*, *marcelli*, papal and royal *carlini* and Florentine *grossi*, and Milanese *testoni*, etc.

Second Item: I also possess, in set and unset jewels, so-and-so many pieces, among which are many *balassi* set in gold, rings weighing so-and-so many ounces, carats, grains, etc., per piece or in bulk, which you can express in any manner you wish. There are so-and-so many sapphires set on clamps for women; they weigh so much. And there are so-and-so many rubies, unset, weighing so much. The rest consists of unpolished pointed diamonds, etc. Here you may give such descriptions and weight as you desire.

Third Item: I have clothes of many kinds; so many of such kind; and so many of such-and-such kind, etc., describing their condition, colors, linings, styles, etc.

Fourth Item: I have several kinds of silverware, as cups, basins, *rammi*, *cosileri*, *piromi*, etc. Here describe all the different kinds one by one, and weigh each kind diligently. Keep an account of pieces and weights, and of the alloy, whether the Venetian or the one used at Ragusa, etc. Also mention the stamp or mark that they might have.

Fifth Item: I also have so much *massaria dei lini*—that is, bed sheets, tablecloths, shirts, handkerchiefs, etc., so many of each. Of the bed sheets, so many are made three-piece sheets, and so many are three and one-half, etc., mentioning whether the linen is Padua linen or some other kind, new or used; length so many *braccia*, etc.; so many shirts, etc.; table cloths of so many threads; so many big handkerchiefs and so many small, mentioning whether new or used, giving the different kind in your own way.

Sixth Item: I have so many feather beds and their respective pillows, mentioning whether the feathers are new or used, whether the pillow cases are new or used, etc., which altogether or one by one weigh so much, marked with my mark or with some other mark, as the custom is.

Seventh Item: I have at home or in the store so much merchandise of different kinds: First, so many cases of ginger *michino*, weighing so many pounds, marked with such-and-such mark, and so on, describing each kind of said goods with all their marks that you might possibly give and with all the possible accuracy as to weight, number, measurement, etc.

Eighth Item: I have so many cases of ginger *bellidi*, etc., and so many sacks of pepper, long pepper or round pepper, depending on what it is; so many packages of cinnamon, etc., that weigh so much; so many packages of cloves, etc., that weigh so much, with *fusti polvere* and *cappellitti* or without, etc., and so many pieces of *verzini* [salami] weighing so much, and so much sandalwood, red or white, weighing so much, and so on, entering one item after another.

Ninth Item: I have so many skins for coverings, that is, so many white kids and so many *albertoni* or *marchiani*, etc., so many of such and such kind, so many fox skins, so many tanned and so many raw, so many chamois skins tanned, and so many raw.

Tenth Item: I have so many fine skins, *fore armenti*, *dossi varii*, *zebelini*, etc., so many of such-and-such kind—defining diligently and truthfully each time so that truth will always guide you, distinguishing the things that ought to be entered by pieces and those that ought to be entered by weight, and those that ought to be entered by measurement, because in these three ways business is conducted everywhere: certain things are reckoned by the bushel, others by the hundreds, others by the pound, others by numbers, others by single numbers as leather goods or skins, others by the piece, as precious stones and fine pearls, etc.; so you will make a notation of each thing. These examples will serve as a guide for all the rest.

Eleventh Item: I have in real estate: first, a house with so many stories, so many rooms, courtyard, wells, garden, etc., situated in St. Apostle Street over the Canal, adjoining such-and-such parties, etc., giving the names of the boundary line properties, making reference to the oldest and most reliable deeds, if there are any; and so, if you have more houses in different localities, you will enter them in a similar way.

Twelfth Item: I have so many pieces of land under cultivation (fields or *staiora* or *panora*), entering them by the name according to the usage of the country where you are, saying where they are situated, as, for instance, a field of so many *tavole* or *canne* or *pertiche*, or *bevolche*, etc., situated in such-and-such town in the province of Padua or somewhere else, adjoining the land of so-and-so, giving all the boundary lines and referring to the deeds or the description from the recorder's office, for which land you pay taxes in such-and-such municipality, which are worked by so-and-so with a yearly income of so much, etc.; you will enter all your possessions, [including] cattle, etc.

Thirteenth Item: I have on deposit with the Camera de l'Impresti, or with another bank in Venice, so many ducats; or with the parish of Canareggio, etc., or part in one parish and part in another, giving the names under which they have been deposited, mentioning the book of the bank, the number of the page where your account is, and the name of the clerk who keeps said book, so that you can easily find your account when you go to get money, because in such offices they must keep very many accounts on account of the big crowd that sometimes goes there, and you must also see that dates are put down precisely so that you know when everything falls due and what the percent is.

Fourteenth Item: I have so many debtors: one is so-and-so, who owes me so many ducats, and so on, giving the names of each one, putting down all annotations as to the names, their family names, and how much they owe you and why; also, whether there are any written papers or notarial instruments. In total, I have so many ducats to collect, you will say, of good money, if the money is due from good people, otherwise you will say of bad money.

Fifteenth Item: I am debtor in total to the extent of so many ducats, etc. I owe so many to so-and-so. Here mention your creditors one by one, writing down whether there are any documents or writings or instruments; if possible, mention the persons present when the debt was incurred, the reason, the time and place, for any case that might arise in court or out.

Source: Pacioli, Luca. *The Rules of Double-Entry Bookkeeping: Particularis de computis et scripturis* (Venice, 1494). Translated by John B. Geijsbeek. n.p: IICPA, 2010, pp. 18–23. Reprinted with permission from IICPA.

FAMILY AND GENDER

Early Fifteenth-Century Households, Housewives, and Servants: Francesco Barbaro. "On Running the Venetian Patrician Household." *On Wifely Duties* (1416)

Young Venetian nobleman and humanist Francesco Barbaro (1390–1454) was a friend of Lorenzo di Giovanni de' Medici of Florence and wrote On Wifely Duties as a wedding present. It reflects his class's expectations and prejudices, and harnesses a surprisingly wide range of classical advice drawn from his own extensive reading, especially of the Greeks. Embedded in this short, edited section alone are ideas or examples from Aristotle, Xenophon, Plutarch, Hesiod, and Homer. Since upper-class men often married women much younger than they were, prescriptive advice such as this was quite popular.

We are interested in the care of our property and the diligence proper to our servants and staff because it is necessary to have both property and servants, without whose help family life itself cannot exist. Surely it is in these two things that the management of domestic matters primarily is involved, for unless a wife imposes her own judgment and precepts on these matters, the operation of the household will have no order and will be in great disarray. Men are naturally endowed with strength of mind and body; both for these and other reasons, they provision their homes by their labor, industry and willingness to undergo hardships. Conversely, I think we may infer that since women are by nature weak they should diligently care for things concerning the household. For weakness can never be separated from cares nor cares from vigilance. What is the use of bringing home great wealth unless the wife will work at preserving, maintaining, and utilizing it? . . . Wives ought not to lack praise if they merely organize, as is their duty, the wealth that has collected in the home. They ought to attend, therefore, to governing their households just as Pericles daily attended to the affairs of Athens. And they ought always to consider how well they are doing so that they will never be deficient in their care, interest, and diligence in household matters. They will surely be successful in this matter if they do what they should do, that is, if they are accustomed to stay at home and oversee everything there.

It is now proper to speak, as we have promised, about servants, who, provided they are not neglected, can add great luster to our houses and be useful and pleasant. So they will be if wives will instruct them carefully and if they will not get angry with them before, having warned them, they discover that they have made

the same mistakes. I should like that wives, in these matters as in others, follow the example of the leaders of the bees, who allow no one under their control to be lazy or negligent. [Roman statesman] Marcus Cato the Elder absolutely followed this precept in household management, so that he, a censor himself, was thought to have fallen slowly, acting the part of a good man in this regard: he immediately sold those too old to work and always believed that it was in no way proper to keep useless slaves in his household. Wives should adopt this ancient custom as their own, so that they might convert ignorant servants into skillful ones and then promote any maidservant who showed herself hardworking, faithful, and diligent at lesser tasks to the custody of the [food and wine] cellars.

Thrifty wives ought constantly to seek out and appoint sober stewards for the provisions and address them courteously and be generous to them, so that by the great interest of the mistress the industry of the steward increases daily. They should feed their servants so that they will satisfy both their human needs and reward their constant labor. Wives should clothe their servants as befits the season, climate, and place. Moreover, as Hesiod advises, they should always be careful that servants are not separated from their children and families, for servants will always find a way to stay together with their own family, even secretly. Furthermore, servants will be very grateful if especially good medical care is provided when a member of their family is taken sick. For these acts of humanity, this solicitousness will make servants very conscientious and hardworking for the household. We can see this, if we may return to the same example, in the case of the bees who never desert their leader on account of his care and provision for them. They always follow him wherever he goes as a sign of their goodwill. . . .

In military affairs, legates, tribunes, and centurions, and in civil government praetors, treasurers, and other magistrates have specific duties in specific matters; so in domestic affairs, when each servant is assigned only a few tasks, he is best able to perform diligently his duties. Hence, if wives want to provide well for the management of the households, they should separate the tasks of overseeing work from those of manual labor. In this way it will be clear what should be done by each servant and just what is expected of him. Unless a specific place is assigned to each person on a ship, everything would be confused, even if no storm were raging. We know that heaven itself, which is the final resting place appointed for us, is comprised of a concatenation of things where one part is joined to another until all the parts fit together in a harmonious whole. If the strings of a harp are well played, they will make one harmony from different notes, so that no sound could be sweeter or more pleasant to the hearer. Hence, if wives will assign specific tasks to their servants and specific places for their supplies, they will see that such order contributes greatly to the splendor, utility, and pleasantness of their homes.

Source: Kohl, Benjamin G., and Ronald G. Witt. *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978, pp. 215–20. Reprinted with permission of the University of Pennsylvania Press.

A FUTURE POPE'S LETTER TO HIS FATHER ON HIS OWN PATERNITY: LETTER OF AENEAS SILVIUS PICCOLOMINI TO SILVIO PICCOLOMINI (1443)

Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (1405–1464), of noble Siennese blood, was educated in Siena, studying the arts and civil law. His humanistic interests and skills as a writer drew him into the circle of high Church leaders. Although he was not ordained a priest until 1446, he was elected pope in 1458 as Pius II. As a young man, in Scotland he fathered an illegitimate son, who died, and another in Strasbourg in 1442. In the following letter to his father, Silvio Piccolomini, the future pope talks about his son, whom Aeneas's father is to raise. In the letter, Aeneas reflects very secular values regarding the importance of having offspring, arguing with Church prohibitions against extramarital sex. He also outlines in detail the circumstances of the boy's conception.

Aeneas Silvius, poet, sends manifold greetings to his father, Silvio.

Father, you write that you are uncertain whether to rejoice or to mourn that the Lord has given me progeny. Although I see the cause for joy, I do not see one for sorrow. What is sweeter for a human being than to beget someone similar to himself, both to extend his bloodline and for you to have someone to leave behind? What is more blessed on earth than to see one's children's children? Truly, it is an enormous pleasure for me that my seed was fruitful, and that, before I die, something of me remains. I give thanks, father, to the Lord who prefigured a woman's childbearing in the sea, that a little Aeneas will play near you and my mother, and that the grandfather will supply the comfort that a father should supply. If my birth was a joy to you, Father, why should my son not be a joy to me? Will not an infant's face also give joy to you when you see my image in it? Will it not be a pleasure to you when a child hangs from your neck and utters childish words of coaxing?

But you say that I should bewail my crime—that I begot my son in sin. I do not know what opinion you have of me. Certainly, you begot no son of stone or iron, being flesh yourself. You know what kind of rooster you were. I am no eunuch [castrated man], nor one of the frigid. Nor am I a hypocrite, wishing to seem, rather than be, good. I will admit my error freely because I am neither more holy than David, nor wiser than Solomon. This fault is ancient and entrenched,

but I do not know anyone who lacks it. It is quite clear that this plague, if it is a plague to use nature's gifts—although I do not see why sexual intercourse ought to be condemned so much—is broadly compatible with nature, which does nothing wrongly. In all lovers it arouses this appetite so that the human race will be continued.

You say, I think, that there are certain limits within which this is permissible, nor should this appetite be indulged outside the legitimate bonds of matrimony. This fault rightly and often is admitted into the precincts of marriage. There are also certain limits to drinking, eating and talking, but who observes them? Who is so just that he does not lapse seven times a day? The hypocrite talks and says that he knows of no fault in himself. I know there is no merit in me, and only divine compassion, which knows we are sinful and prone to lust, and which—as is obvious to all—closes not to us the font of indulgence, gives me hope of mercy. But enough of this.

Now because you asked for news, lest you nourish a stranger for me, I will expound in a few words how this came about. Two years have not elapsed since I was an envoy at Strasbourg. It was two weeks before the beginning of last year's Lent. When I was at leisure for many days, a woman came there from Britain, seeking my place of lodging in one of the buildings. I was attracted to her neither because of her beauty nor her age, but rather because she knew Italian very well and greeted me in Tuscan, which pleased me all the more for being so rare in that region. I delight in women's jests. She excelled in these and soon I thought about the fluency of Cleopatra, who allured not only Antony but also Julius Caesar with eloquence. I said to myself, "Who would reprehend me if I, a little man, were to do what great men have not spurned?" I took as examples sometimes Moses, sometimes Aristotle, sometimes Christians. What more? Desire triumphed; I grew heated. I undertook to enflame the woman with many flatteries, but, as a wave is driven back by the rough shores of a strait, she held my words in contempt and broke off contact for three days. . . . Night came on the day following which the woman was to leave. I feared my prey would escape. I asked that the latch of the door of her chamber not be fastened. I said I would come on that stormy night. She refused and offered me no hope. I persevered. She always offered the same response.

I went to her room. I said to myself, "Do I know whether she will do what I commanded?" I remembered Zima the Florentine [a character in Boccaccio's *Decameron*] I said, "Perhaps she will imitate his friend. Try it." Afterward, when I heard silence all around, I went up to the woman's bedchamber. The door was closed but not locked. I opened it, entered, and possessed the woman. There my son was begotten. The woman is called Elizabeth. . . . I ask you, my father, to receive and nourish your grandson. . . .

Source: Izbicki, Thomas M., Gerald Christianson, and Philip Krey, trans. *Reject Aeneas, Accept Pius: Selected Letters of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pope Pius II)*. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2006, pp. 159–61. Republished with permission of Catholic University of America Press; permission conveyed through Copyright Clearance Center, Inc.

FASHION AND APPEARANCE

Venetian Sumptuary Laws (1304–1512)

More than any Italian city, Venice understood luxury and its roles in distinguishing social classes. Renaissance-era Venetians also knew how expensive fine clothing and accessories and food could be, as they were among the most active of all the merchants of such finery in Europe. As Venice's government engaged in costly wars and hiked taxes, its organs passed laws restricting or forbidding the purchase or public display of all manner of luxury goods, lest the poor look too good or the wealthy go bankrupt. And, of course, there was the sin of vanity.

1304 (from Brother Paolino's *Government of the Family*)

The wife interferes with the study of wisdom, nor is there anyone who can attend properly to wisdom and to the wife at the same time. While the husband takes trouble to satisfy her with everything in fashion, as costly garments, gold, precious stones, servants, and household goods, she is still full of lamentations, and says, “That woman is better dressed than I am—that other woman is more honored than I am—and I, unhappy woman, am despised by all. What have you brought me from the Rialto [market]?”

Sometimes the man follows too much the will of the woman in buying her ornaments, and this gives rise to much evil, excessive expenditure and the woman is more than ever filled with pride and for vainglory desires still more to go out and show herself. Therefore, the man should dress his wife as he thinks right and according to the manner which prevails among his equals. And if the custom of the city in this respect is extravagant, it should be regulated by laws after the manner of the Romans.

1437 (from Gallicciolli's *Memorie Venete Antiche*, 1795; Quoting an Italian Chronicler)

The war with the Duke of Milan being continued, and the Duke having good fortune owing much to treachery, the Commune of Venice appealed to God, and

ordered many sermons to be preached and alms to be given, with devout processions. And Lorenzo Zustignan, a man of saintly life, made provision with regard to the sumptuousness of the women, and commanded that after the first day of August, under pain of excommunication, no woman might wear silk, or false hair, or trains to her dresses, nor adorn her head with gold or silver or pearls, nor wear long sleeves, nor ornament her sleeves with pearls.

August 1443 (Venetian Senate)

Whereas, for some time, an abominable fashion has been introduced among our ladies and other females of every condition who go about with the head and face covered, contrary to the ancient and good custom; under which dishonest mode various dishonest acts [including prostitution] have been and every day are committed, against the honor of God and of our dominion. . . . It is decreed that for the future no lady or other woman or girl—of any condition whatsoever—may go abroad with the head and face covered beyond what has been the custom, by land or by water, except those ladies and other good persons who desire to hear mass, and sermons, and divine service, and attend confession. . . . To such it is conceded, when they enter any church for the said reasons, to remain covered as it shall please them. Further, all ladies and other females may go covered to the earliest communions in their parish churches, or in the convent churches near, but only on Sundays and the prescribed festivals, and they may return home covered. . . it being understood that the earliest communions are those before high Mass.

October 1504 (Venetian Senate)

Among all the superfluous and useless expenditure for the purpose of ostentation made by the women of this our city, the most injurious to the substance of the gentlemen and citizens is the constant change made by the women in the form of their clothes. For example, whereas formerly they wore trains to the dresses, the fashion was introduced of wearing the dresses round and without any trains. But in the last few months certain women have begun again to use large and ample trains, trailing on the ground, and without doubt all others will desire to follow their example, if measures be not taken, and very great harm would be brought to the fortunes of one said gentlemen and citizens, as every member of this Council, in his prudence, very well understands. For the aforesaid dresses that have been cut short would be thrown away, and it would be necessary to make new dresses, which would lead to great expense. Further, it is convenient that what the aforesaid women have once desired, with the same they should be obliged to be content.

May 1512 (Venetian State Superintendents of Luxury)

The waiters and cooks who serve at the said feasts are compelled—the waiters under pain of [a fine of] 20 ducats, and the cooks under pain of 10 ducats and four months imprisonment—to come to our office and declare the time and place of any banquet for which they have been engaged in order that our officers may be sent to inspect and find out if in any respect the law will be violated. And the waiters, under the aforesaid penalty, are under obligation to lead the officers through the hall and smaller rooms, in order that they may perform their duty. And if any person of the house where they happen to be, or any other person, should interfere with our officers, and forbid them to do their duty, or should molest them in any way by making use of injurious epithets, or throwing bread or oranges at their heads, as certain presumptuous persons have done, or should be guilty of any insolent act, it will be the duty of the waiters to leave the house immediately, and not to wait nor be present at the banquet, under the aforesaid penalty. And nevertheless they shall have their salary, as if they had served.

Source: Newett, Mary Margaret. “The Sumptuary Laws of Venice in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries.” In Mary Margaret Newett, T. F. Tout, and James Tait, eds. *Historical Essays by Members of the Owens College, Manchester*. London: Longmans, Green, and, Co., 1902, pp. 247–48, 250, 255–56, 259, 263, 268.

OF GOWNS, HOUSEGOWNS, AND DIRTY LAUNDRY: LETTERS OF MARGHERITA DATINI TO HER HUSBAND, FRANCESCO DATINI (1397–1398)

Francesco Datini of Prato (c. 1335–1410) was an entrepreneur whose life was dedicated to making money. He made a small fortune in Avignon, where he married Florentine exile Margherita Bandini. They relocated to Prato in 1382, where he built a palazzo, bought a villa, and traded mostly in cloth. They spent much time together and apart in Prato and nearby Florence, and while apart they exchanged hundreds of letters that have survived. These discuss health, food, taxes, servants, and clothing. Of Margherita’s 251 letters, 82 mention clothing. Nanni di Guiduccio was the master mason then working for Francesco; Argomento was a carter who transported goods and letters between Prato and Florence.

27 October 1397: We spoke to Nanni di Guiduccio about the lining for his wife and he says she wants it to fit over her gown, and it should be loose and have sleeves, and not be cut away in front. Now, since she is a very big woman, I will

send for Nanni tomorrow and tell him to make her try one of mine that I will give him. If it fits her well then I will send it to you so you can use it as a model.

28 October 1397: As for the lining for Nanni's wife, they seem unable to say what they want, and they do not know the difference between a coarse material and a smooth one. But I can't see why she would want a high-quality lining when she will not be wearing it against the body, so it would be better if you bought a coarse one. He wants to spend up to three florins, and even more if you think it appropriate. I will send one of her gowns. Make it on that model, and make it hang more broadly at the front—not tight. And make it longer. This way she will be properly covered. She wants the sleeves wide and a little open at the ends. Have it made broad enough for her to put it on easily.

29 October 1397: Nanni di Guiduccio's wife came to see me today with one of her gowns, and told me that it is too small for her. I marked on the shoulder how much wider she wants the new lining, and I marked it at the waist, as she wants the same width from the top down to there. From the waist down, if they think it is too broad, they should make it the size they think best. I tacked on a piece of cloth to show how much longer it should be. I put another piece of cloth to mark how far down the split in the front should be. Don't broaden the split in the middle. Don't take any notice of the fact that the gown is cut away at the front. Make sure that the lining is comfortable enough for her to put it on easily. She wants it to be black and warm, and she wants the sleeves broader and longer than these ones. . . .

20 March 1398: Regarding sending [our young niece] Caterina's house gown, I will send one as you wish, but in my view, it is unnecessary for many reasons. It seems to me that she has a perfectly good house gown, considering her father's [unfortunate] situation and the difficulties ahead. I think you should put a bridle on the mule by ensuring that her house gown is not made of too fine a cloth and the [torn] has about ten ounces of silver and the belt no more than six. I noticed that Strozza di Carlo's daughter, who is your neighbor in Florence, has a plain woolen house gown no better than Caterina's, and her belt is no finer than the one Domenico is having made. I believe that if I had a neighbor whose social standing merited that his daughter should always dress better than I, I would be very embarrassed to wear a house gown that was finer than hers. Nevertheless, if you decide that is what you want, I will send it to you.

21 March 1398: Send me my grey woolen overgown with Argomento, and the large mantle Guido usually wears that is hanging on the post there. Tell [my sister] Francesca to return to Monna Mea the gown I borrowed from her, if she hasn't already done so. She'll find it under the daybed. Tell Caterina to search in the room upstairs for that headdress I used to wear—in every place where I might have left it—and send it to me. Remember to bring Monna Lapa's thread. . . . Tell Francesca to send me the black thread that she doesn't want to use, because I will use it in this household.

22 March 1398: Argomento delivered your letter to me. With it was one addressed to Niccolo di Piero and two sacks of dirty clothes that we checked against the list; everything was there.

12 April 1398: I am sending you a basket with three towels and three napkins, both small and big, a small towel, a tablecloth, and a set of underwear for you.

14 April 1398: Seeing that you were staying there so long I had my mantle and overgown cut out, but when I had the cloth remeasured I discovered that there were 20 yards, so it must have shrunk by four yards when it was dyed. Once the mantle and the overgown were done, I had half a yard of worsted cloth left and not enough for me to have a hood; so see if you can manage to obtain a little more for a hood, because I wouldn't want to wear a new mantle and an old hood.

15 April 1398: I am sending you twelve loaves of bread in Francesca's basket, and also a small amount of my worsted cloth so she can have the buttons made for my overgown and mantle; she should make sure they are done properly, by someone who knows how. Give her the money for the silk and for whatever else is necessary.

5 June 1398: [Our slave and mother of your child] Lucia would like you to buy her a piece of cloth for a striped overgown, not in the Sicilian style but another sort, as long as it is strong and of good quality. I need one too, but I want it in the Sicilian style. Ask Francesca how much she needs for one of hers, and buy two lengths.

6 June 1398: Because it is very hot here today—and as you know I cut down my cotton gowns for [Francesco's young daughter with Lucia] Ginevra—so I don't have any; tell [your partner] Domenico di Cambio to see if he can find some pretty ones in the Sicilian style; I don't want real Sicilian ones because I don't want to spend much. And remember one for Lucia also, but not the same as mine. Get one with three stripes, or whatever he thinks, as long as it is not like mine, and it should be of strong material because she wants a serviceable one.

19 August 1398: We will do the other things without reporting back to you. If you have dirty laundry [in Florence], send it to us [in Prato].

Source: James, Carolyn, and Antonio Pagliaro. *Margherita Datini: Letters to Francesco Datini*. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012, pp. 244–74. Reprinted with permission.

FOOD AND DRINK

Wine and Patronage: Giovanni Boccaccio. "Cisti's Wine."
Decameron (1353)

After 1350, Florentine poet, scholar, and novellista Giovanni Boccaccio penned the 100 short stories in his famous and influential Decameron. Many

stories reflect simple truths about daily life, such as that of Florentines Cisti, the baker, and the powerful Geri Spini, the second story in Decameron, which is related on the sixth day by storyteller Pampinea. Though simple, the story weaves two common Florentine themes: the appreciation of good wine and the desire of the lower social classes to please the powerful and gain their patronage.

“I tell how Pope Boniface, with whom Sir Geri Spini stood in high honor, sent to Florence certain noble ambassadors on account of the great need he was in. They dismounted at the house of Sir Geri, and—talking together of the Pope’s affairs—it happened that Sir Geri and these ambassadors walked out nearly every morning, passing in front of Santa Maria Ughi, where Cisti, the baker, had his oven and personally exercised his art. Although fortune had bestowed on him such a humble calling, she had also been very kind to him as he had become exceedingly rich. Though he would not change his occupation, he lived splendidly, having, among other good things, the best red and white wine that were to be found in Florence or in the country round.

Seeing that Sir Geri and the ambassadors of the Pope passed his door every day and that the heat was great, he thought that it would be an act of courtesy to offer them some of his good white wine to drink. But having regard to his class and that of Sir Geri, it did not appear fitting that the invitation should come from him, so he cast about for a way of inducing Sir Geri to invite himself. Always dressed in a jacket of dazzling white and an apron fresh from the laundry so that he looked more like a miller than a baker, every morning he set in front of his door—at the hour when Sir Geri and the ambassadors were wont to pass—a new copper water-pot, well tinned, and a new earthen vase of Bologna full of his good white wine and two tumblers, which seemed to be of silver, so bright were they. Then, sitting down, he would clear his throat once or twice, and as they passed begin to sip his wine with such manifest delight that a desire for it would have been raised in a dead man.

Sir Geri saw this on one morning, and on another, and on the third he said, “What is it, Cisti? Is it good?” Cisti, rising quickly, replied, “Sir, yes indeed, but how good I could never make you understand unless you taste it.” Sir Geri, in whom perhaps the weather, or more business than usual, or perchance the tasty sips of Cisti had caused thirst, turned to the ambassadors, and, smiling, said, “What say you, gentlemen, would it not be well if we taste the wine of this good man? Most likely we shall have no cause to repent.” And together they went towards Cisti.

He placed a fine bench outside and begged them to be seated. To their servants who pushed forward to wash the tumblers he said, “Companions, stand back and leave me to my work—for I know as well how to pour out wine as to make bread—and do not think you shall have a drop.” Saying this, he washed four good

new tumblers, had a fresh small earthen jar of his good white wine brought up, and carefully gave drinks to Sir Geri and his companions.

The wine seemed to them the best they had tasted for a long, long time, and they praised it mightily, so while the ambassadors stayed they went nearly every morning together with Sir Geri to drink. When the time came for their departure, Sir Geri gave a fine banquet to which he invited many of the most honorable citizens and he also invited Cisti, who would not go on any account. So Sir Geri ordered one of his servants to go for a flask of Cisti's wine and to serve half a glass of it to every guest during the first course. The servant, perchance angered because he had never been able to taste of the wine, took a large double flask, and when Cisti saw it he said, "My son, Sir Geri has not sent you to me." The servant affirmed that he had, but unable to obtain any other reply, returned to Sir Geri and told him. And Sir Geri said, "Return, and tell him it is so, and if he answers you in the same fashion, ask him to whom I send you." The servant went and said, "I assure you, Cisti, Sir Geri sends me to you." Cisti answered [upon seeing again the double flask], "And I am sure, my son, it is not so." "Well then, replied the servant, to whom has he sent me?" And Cisti said, "To the Arno [for river water]."

And when the servant brought this reply to Sir Geri, the eyes of his intellect opened and he said to the servant "Let me see what manner of flask you have taken." And when he saw it, he said "Cisti was right," and scolded the man well and made him take a proper [smaller] flask. When Cisti saw it, he said, "Now I know Sir Geri has sent you," and he filled it joyfully.

On the same day, Cisti filled a small barrel with like wine. Having it carried with all due care to the house of Sir Geri, he went there and waited on him, saying, "Sir, I would not that you should think that the large flask of this morning alarmed me. Only it seemed to me that you had forgotten what I said to you, that this is not everyday wine for a family, and so I desired to remind you this day. Now, as I do not wish to act as scolding parent, I have brought you all the wine to do with as you will." Sir Geri accepted Cisti's gift with great joy and rendered him such thanks as were fitting, and ever after looked upon him as a friend."

Source: Adapted from Ross, Janet. *Florentine Palaces and Their Stories*. London: J.M. Dent, 1905, pp. 308–13.

A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY PHYSICIAN'S DIETARY AND MEDICAL REGIMEN: UGO BENZI. PHYSICIAN'S CONSILIUM #91 (1482)

Ugo Benzi (1376–1439) of Siena had been a student at Bologna, and a teacher there and at Pavia, Padua, Parma, Florence, and his hometown. He also served

as physician to Ferrara's Marquis Niccolo d'Este (1430–1449). Among other works, he composed a vernacular Regimen of Health that was reprinted into the seventeenth century, and circulated a collection of 111 of his medical consilia, which was first printed in 1482. Here we see the three standard parts of a consilium: facts about the subject; recommendations for a health regimen, food being the longest; and recommendations for medicines. Influential—his six books underwent 42 editions from 1478 to 1600—his advice here was both perfectly traditional and state of the art.

The distinguished and noble gentleman, Messer Mariscoto of Nullano (?), about sixty years of age, of a complexion naturally tending to hot and moist, suffers from gout in his whole body and likewise from arthritis, whose matter is mixed, although at present, as usual, phlegm predominates. And at intervals he is so free from discomfort that he can easily walk or ride horseback, although in some of his joints a certain degree of stiffness persists. And I will give him here a brief regimen, supported by medical treatment, to the end that his health be preserved as well as possible.

[Air] First, let him occupy a good chamber between two roof terraces or balconies (*solaria*). The chamber should be warmed in cold weather by a fire of dry wood. And in general he should be amply protected against the cold by clothes, shoes, and other appropriate means.

[Sleep] And let him sleep seven or eight hours per night, and when that is not sufficient, let him sleep in the morning before tierce [about 9:00 AM], with his head well elevated and his body well covered.

[Evacuation] And let him be sure to have a [bowel] movement every day, and if nature does not respond, let him use a clyster.

[Exercise] And for his exercise let him walk or ride horseback every day before eating, but not if it gives him much pain; and after eating let him refrain from effort.

[Emotions] And let him forego sexual intercourse as much as possible.

[Food and Drink] In regard to his food, he should always incline to moderation, making it a rule to leave the table before his appetite is completely satisfied. Similarly in regard to drink. And let him secure a vessel of 17 ounces and fill it half full of water of honey, and fill the remaining half with wine, and let him not consume more than the contents of this vessel at lunch or at dinner. His wine should be red, clear, and of moderate strength.

For food let him eat the meat of chickens, partridges, pheasants, larks, and other small birds; also squab, doves, and quail; and similarly kid, veal, and the

flesh of young sucklings and of castrated animals; also young rabbits and young deer. He should refrain from waterfowl, domestic pork, lamb, and beef; also from dried meats and all other forms of the flesh of the above-mentioned animals.

Let him use bread made of good flour, well cooked and well leavened, and let him avoid cheese. Fresh eggs, however, are good, i.e. the yolks lightly cooked, in the shell, or poached or otherwise dished up, or in a tender omelet fried in sweet oil, or prepared in other ways, provided they not be overdone nor mixed with cheese. Farinaceous foods, such as pancakes, rolls, and so forth he should forego.

As for vegetables, none is good, but he can make a dish [salad] of spelt, barley, panic, millet, spinach, blite, borage, bugloss, balm, fennel, anise, parsley, marjoram, and savory herbs, such as sage and thyme, along with bread crumbs and [hard-boiled] eggs—singly or jointly.

And he should eat but little fish; the less harmful sort are those that are small and scaly, living in clear water and of good odor. Crayfish, however, are not good.

And of fruits the following are suitable: raisins, figs, either fresh or dried, almonds, pine-nuts, filberts. And for dessert he can have pears stewed with wine and anise and fennel; but from other moist fruits he had better refrain, such as apples and cherries and peaches and so forth, save that a small quantity, e.g. of melons or plums, may be taken before a meal in summer.

And as for condiments, he must forego vinegar, but he may use verjuice [sour fruit juice] and cinnamon and pepper and good spices. And he shall not use raw herbs.

[Medicinal Treatment] Coming now to medicinal treatment, at the middle of February or a little earlier he should start taking the following syrup: 3 drams of compound syrup without vinegar; 2 drams of oxymel of squills; 3 drams each of sage-water, parsley-water, fennel-water, and marjoram-water. Strain and flavor with ginger and muscat nut. This will be sufficient for four doses. To be taken hot at dawn.

Also, one-half ounce each of fetid pills (?) and of greater hermodactyl. To be divided into seven doses. To be taken two hours before sunrise and after the syrup. And on this day he should use great precaution against cold and not eat before the eighteenth hour. And on the following morning let him use a cleansing clyster, and take 2 ounces of theriac with 2 drams of honey-water seven hours before lunch. And a similar purge should be made at the beginning of October. During the intervening periods he should be purged without supervision at least once a month, taking one ounce of the following pills at midnight or thereabouts: one-half ounce of pills of the eight-fold antidote; one-half ounce of larch-fungus; one-half scruple of sal-gem. Make into pills with sage-water, and they are for one dose only, but he may have them prepared in advance for many doses.

Also, in winter once a week he should take 2 ounces of mithridate five hours before eating.

Also, in cold weather he should wear on his feet at night little bags of ground salt.

And often in the morning before breakfast he should wash his legs and feet and knees with the following water: 2 minims [drops] of sage, chamomile, and laurel; 20 pounds of water; 5 pounds of salt. To be boiled over a fire until the salt dissolves, and used frequently as a hot foot-bath.

Source: Lockwood, Dean Putnam. *Ugo Benzi, Medieval Philosopher and Physician, 1376–1439*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951, pp. 54–56 (with minor emendations). Reprinted with the permission of the University of Chicago Press.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY

Florence's Old Market in the Later Fourteenth Century: Antonio Pucci. "The Character of the Mercato Vecchio in Florence" (c. 1380s)

Poet Antonio Pucci of Florence (c.1310–1388) was a poet and town crier whose works celebrated and chided his beloved city. He wrote of legends but also daily life and common people in the simple vernacular of the streets. The Mercato Vecchio (old market) was Florence's original marketplace, located on the site of the ancient Roman forum. By the fourteenth century Florence had added the Mercato Nuovo (new), which throughout the Renaissance hosted higher-end items such as expensive textiles and high-quality crafts. The Mercato Vecchio featured food and the everyday wares the poem mentions. As well as the bright, Pucci also captures the dark: the hustlers, gamblers, and even the violent.

Truly I've seen many marketplaces
in various cities, but I wish to speak
of those nearby, leaving aside all others.

That in Perugia seems to me fine:
it is indeed full of many things
and Florentines regard it as good.

But don't mention other cities:
even to save your life you wouldn't find
anyone there to act as your witness.

The market in Siena, called the Campo,
seems a hollow: you expire there
of cold in winter, heat in summer.

But these and the others, if I see straight,
 are as nothing for produce and beauty
 and for that which sustains the people,
 compared to the market that inspires me
 to write these verses. For in the city
 where I was born, it gives pleasure to all:
 Florence, that is. And if report is true,
 the Mercato Vecchio feeds the whole world
 and takes the prize from all other markets.

So I have strengthened my intention
 to describe to you quickly in words
 the qualities I see in our market.

Briefly, then, they are these:

It has four churches at its four corners,
 and at each corner two salient roads.

 Around the market artisans and traders
 of each and every kind: some of these, sirs,
 I shall describe to you as we proceed.

It has medical doctors for all ailments,
 and sellers of woolen cloth and linen,
 grocers and traders in spices.

 There are sellers of glasses and jars,
 and those who give food, drink, and lodging
 to all sorts of miserable youths.

Great warehouses it has, of many sorts,
 and the finest butchery you'll find,
 in my opinion, selling good meat.

 And always great wheeling and dealing:
 the hustlers are in their element,
 for the market is full of their types,
 that is, of moneylenders and ragmen,
 exchange dealers and gambling houses,
 and everything to ease their business.

 To another side are the poulterers,
 always supplied in all the seasons
 with hares, wild boar and venison,
 with pheasants, partridge and capons
 and other birds, hawks and falcons,
 that would suit the Lord Spendthrift.

 There are always female costers [street vendors] of all sorts:
 I mean those who quarrel all day long
 over two dried chestnuts, swearing badly
 and calling one another whores.

Their baskets of fruit are always full
to overflowing, according to season.

Other women sell eggs and cheese
for making vegetable pies and tarts
or ravioli and other such things.

Close to these are the shrewd women traders
selling mustard and green vegetables
and all sorts of herb, both mild and strong.

And countryfolk come here in the morning
to give fresh supplies to their maidservants,
everyone restocking her kitchen.

When the season for fresh fruit comes round,
young foreign girls turn up with their baskets
of figs and grapes and pears and peaches:

If you joke with them they'll gladly listen. . . .

There never was so noble a garden
as the Mercato Vecchio at that time,
which feeds the Florentines' sight and tastes.

It has no equal in the world, I think,
as can be proved by winning reasons. . . .

Every morning the street is filled
with cartloads of goods, and so great is the
throng that many stand waiting to pass.

Noble men and ladies stand to one side
and often see the costerwomen and
the gambling hustlers come to blows.

And prostitutes there are, and their pimps,
and fools, bagmen, and good-for-nothings,
and stingy, scabrous gentry-folk.

And you can see who ever loses
puffing with great blasphemies, hand to chest,
giving and receiving many blows.

And sometimes they go to it with knives
and kill each other, altogether
disturbing the beauty of the *piazza*.

And often people hang around and sing,
because they come from all around,
those who live hand-to-mouth by swindling.

And there are some so poor that in the cold
they crouch naked with their arse on their heels,
because they are totally without clothes.

There are basket makers and bakers,
 cleaners of wells and pruners of gardens,
 and carefree people of many sorts.
 When the season comes, countryfolk bring here
 many loads of Calamagno apples
 from Poggibonsi and other places. . .

and dried figs and Carvelle pears,
 quinces and every similar fruit.
 There is the seller of trenchers and bowls,
 the make-up seller and the hosier,
 who sells stockings and fine little hats,
 and the smith, ironmonger, and key-man,
 and, again in season, peasant women
 in a crowd with their pitchers of milk. . . .

Source: Dean, Trevor. *The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000, pp. 122–24. Reprinted by permission of Manchester University Press.

AWAITING THE EXECUTIONER: FLORENTINE WRITER LUCA DELLA ROBBIA ON THE DEATH VIGIL AND DEATH OF HIS FRIEND PIETRO PAGOLO BOSCOLI (1513)

In 1513, republican rebels attempted to assassinate Florence's new rulers, Lorenzo, Giuliano, and Giulio de' Medici. On February 22, condemned conspirators Agostino Capponi and Pietro Pagolo Boscoli lay in their cells in the Bargello prison awaiting execution next morning. Pietro Pagolo's friend Luca della Robbia recorded his visit to the condemned Pietro, who bared his soul and prepared for death as his hour approached. Black Brethren were a lay confraternity dedicated to preparing criminals for execution and accompanying them to the site; Santa Maria Impruneta was an important religious shrine near Florence.

Returning to Pagolo I said: "The confessor has come. His name is Brother Cipriano, son of a peasant at Pont' a Sieve, a learned and good man; God has sent him to you, I doubt not he will satisfy you." And he: "God be praised! Bring him to me." So Brother Cipriano came to Boscoli, who received him with every mark of respect; for lying on a mattress, with his legs manacled and handcuffs on his hands, he raised himself as far as he was able and uncovered himself with both hands, replying to Brother Cipriano—who had said "God preserve you beloved brother"—"And you also, my father, you are most welcome." Then turning to

me: “Arrange things a little, so that he may be as much at ease as possible.” And we did so, and then retired a little so that he might confess [his sins] in secret. . . . The Black Brethren now began, as is their custom, to sing the penitential psalms and to recite; whereupon Pagolo in a quick, loud voice exclaimed: “Fathers and brethren, I dislike such noise, it much annoys me. I have but a short time: I pray you be silent so that I may make my confession, your singing disturbs me. If you will pray to God for me in your hearts, I shall be beholden to you.” And Brother Cipriano added: “Yes, pray each one of you silently, that will be as good and not disturb us. . . . Pagolo called me several times during his confession, recalling his life, and once said: “Luca, as a youth I made a vow to go on foot [on a pilgrimage] to Santa Maria Impruneta, which I have not fulfilled, I pray you to take my vow on yourself; I impose it on you by the law of friendship.” I answered, “I accept it.” Another time he said, “Luca, I commend my mother to you: be to her a third son. Console her with all your strength, she needs it. Go and visit her often during her life, which will not be long, for I know she will soon follow me. Go to the house, talk to her, exhort her to have patience, tell her I die willingly, and that she is to pray to God for me.” And I, with tears, promised. . . .

Seeing that preparations were being made to give him communion he turned to Brother Cipriano, saying: “Will not the sacrament I am about to take give me greater courage?” “You well know that it will,” answered the friar. . . . The Holy Sacrament was then brought, and Pagolo exclaimed, “O infinite goodness! O boundless charity! O salvation of the world! Be merciful to me.” And the tears streamed from his eyes with such devotion and tenderness that he seemed a young girl. . . .

Agnolo the bookseller came up afterwards and he said, “O my Agnolo, kiss me.” And when Agnolo consoled him with loving words, he said “Agnolo, I am prepared to die but I wish to give myself up entirely to God and cannot. I cannot satisfy myself. I wish to meet death without fear and to attain God with my intellect.” Then Agnolo, and Giovanni Covoni, who had joined us, both said, “Pagolo, have no fear; have faith and do not lose yourself in subtleties. The Lord is merciful; give yourself to him: that is sufficient.” “I do,” he answered. . . . Turning to Brother Cipriano, he said, “Do not leave me til the last; aid me to complete the sacrifice; God will repay you for me.” And the friar: “Have no fear my brother. I will be with you, and Luca, your beloved friend, will also aid you.”

And time having come he rose with great courage, and when one of the police wished to put the cloak on him [it was a February morning], he exclaimed, “There is no need for the cloak,” and turning to me with a gesture of affection said, “Farewell,” and nothing else. Thus we went down, the friar comforting him with verses from the psalms. . . .

[At the execution site] the executioner, giving him but a very short reprieve [to pray] severed his head with one blow, and for a time his mouth twitched somewhat. Then Agostino, fervently praying, advanced with great courage, and the executioner cut off his head with two strokes. The Brethren then took the body of Boscoli, and the head was like that of an angel. He was borne to his vault in the Badia [monastery church], and I begged to be allowed to carry the head, and it was granted to me. Thus I was able to fulfill the demands of friendship, and perhaps, or rather certainly, those of patriotism.

Source: Ross, Janet. *Florentine Palaces and Their Stories*. London: J.M. Dent, 1905, pp. 228–31.

POLITICS AND WARFARE

Crime and Punishment in Florence: Luca Landucci's Diary (1465–1497)

Luca Landucci (c. 1436–1516) was a successful apothecary in Florence, married and father of 12, without political ties or ambitions, and a supporter of Dominican reformer and “prophet” Savonarola. History knows him only for having recorded in his diary many events in, and affecting, his city from 1450 through his death. His diary lays out the great moments—war with Pisa, Savonarola’s rise and fall, the Medicis’ fall and resurrection—and small. In his pages plague comes and goes, bread prices rise and fall, values of coins change, monsters are born, and nearby Strozzi palace slowly takes shape. And crimes are punished. . . usually.

1465. 10th April. A young woman, who was the daughter of Zanobi Gherucci, was tried, for having killed, and then thrown into a well, the little girl of Bernardo della Zecca, a goldsmith, for the sake of stealing a pearl necklace and certain silver ornaments that the child wore round her neck. She was taken away in the executioner’s cart, and was beheaded.

17th April. And at this time a man was found coining false money, and he was beheaded.

1470. 15th April. Fifteen men were brought from [the town of] Prato, who had intended to give over the place [to Florence’s enemies], and they were hung.

1473. 2nd June. A *lazzarino* of the Mangano [laborer at the cloth press] was condemned to death and was beheaded. He had committed the crime of violating a girl of about twelve years old in such a way that she died; and then he had buried her body outside of the Gate of Justice. And later it was discovered, as the dogs

raked it up. Sentences were issued against him, but he could not be found. When captured some years after [1473], he confessed to having committed the outrage.

1475. 1st April. A lad of about 23, a peasant from the neighborhood of the Sieci, was arrested, who on Easter night had shut himself up in [the cathedral of] Santa Maria del Fiore, and hidden under the altar of Our Lady towards the Chapter-house; the next morning he robbed the Madonna [statue] of several silver ornaments on her arms, legs and eyes, and behaved in a disgusting way to show his contempt. And imagine how utterly worthless this crazy fellow was, when he had only been liberated by the captain on Holy Thursday after having been imprisoned for theft. On Saturday he was hung from the [City Hall] Bell Tower.

1478. 19th August. A peasant was tried and hung, and was taken down as dead and placed on a bier; but having reached the Tempio [the chapel of the confraternity that buried executed criminals], he recovered consciousness, not being dead. He was taken to [the hospital of] Santa Maria Nuova, where he died after a few days. All Florence saw him.

3rd December. The traitor from Pistoia, called Piero Baldinotti, was taken in the executioner's cart and hung, and the son was imprisoned for life in the Stinche [prison].

1479. 9th March. A man who was said to be a Venetian was hung in the New Market, for having stolen some florins off of a money-changer's table the evening before, in broad daylight; and he had been caught and taken to the rector [of the Money-changer's Guild], and was condemned to be hung.

1480. 27th September. A certain hermit came to the house of Lorenzo de' Medici at Poggio a Caiano; and the servants declared that he intended to murder Lorenzo, so they took him and sent him to the Bargello [jail] and he was put to the rack.

15th October. The hermit died at [the Dominican convent of] Santa Maria Novella, having been tortured in various ways. It is said that they skinned the soles of his feet, and then burnt them by holding them in the fire till the fat dripped off them; after which they set him upright and made him walk across the great hall; and these things caused his death. Opinions were divided as to whether he were guilty or innocent.

1481. 2nd June. One of the Frescobaldi [family], and one Baldovinetti, and one Balducci were arrested; and on the **6th June** they were hung from the windows of the Bargello [jail], or rather, of the House of the Captain, having confessed that they had intended to murder Lorenzo de' Medici.

1487. 28th March. The following case happened: A man was hung on the gallows here in Florence, and was taken down for dead, but was found later not to be so. He was carried to Santa Maria Nuova and remained there until **11th April**. And those in charge. . . finding him of a bad nature, and hearing him talk of taking

vengeance, etc., the Otto di Guardia decided to have him hung a second time, and their sentence was carried out.

1493. 17th August. It happened that a certain unbeliever, to spite the Christians, but mostly out of folly, went about Florence disfiguring the images of Our Lady, and among others, that which is on the pilaster of Or San Michele [church, and that is special to the Apothecaries' Guild], outside. He scratched the eyes of the Child, and of San Onophrius, and threw mud in the face of Our Lady. On this account, the boys began to throw mud at him, and they were joined by grown men, who in their fury stoned him to death with great stones, and then dragged his body about with great vituperation.

1496. 16th October. There was a proclamation that anyone that knew who had thrown an unknown girl of about 22 years of age into a tomb at Santa Maria Novella, after having murdered her and tied her up in two sacks, to give notice; but the murderer was never discovered.

1497. 15th November. One morning at dawn a dead girl was found under the portico of the Spedale [Hospital] di San Pagolo here at Florence; she was discovered by those who looked after those sick of the plague, and they had judged that she had not died of the plague but had been strangled. When the Otto di Guardia heard about it, they published a proclamation declaring that anyone who knew about it and concealed his knowledge would be put to death.

Source: Landucci, Luca Landucci. *A Florentine Diary from 1450 to 1516*. Translated by Alice de Rosen Jervis. Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1927; reprinted 1971, pp. 4, 9, 11, 12, 22, 25, 27, 31, 32, 43, 55, 112, 128.

THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF FLORENTINE LEADER LORENZO DE'MEDICI: NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI. "THE FAILED CONSPIRACY OF 1478" (1526)

This is an account by author of The Prince, Niccolò Machiavelli, of the failed conspiracy of the Pazzi family and its allies to kill Lorenzo de'Medici and overthrow the government. This incident only served to strengthen Lorenzo's power, as it resulted in the death or exile of so many of his enemies. It also led, however, to Pope Sixtus IV declaring war on Florence for two years. While this is one of the more famous instances, Italian civic politics was littered with similar violent power struggles. Cardinal Giulio de'Medici commissioned Machiavelli's History of Florence and received it after becoming Pope Clement VII.

Lorenzo, flushed with youth and power, would assume the direction of everything, and resolved that all transactions should bear an impress of his influence.

The Pazzi, with their nobility and wealth unable to endure so many affronts, began to devise some means of vengeance. The first who spoke of any attempt against the Medici, was Francesco [de' Pazzi], who, being more sensitive and resolute than the others, determined either to obtain what was withheld from him, or lose what he still possessed . . . it would be necessary to change the government of Florence and this they considered could not be done without the deaths of Giuliano and Lorenzo. . . .

Jacopo de' Pazzi was of the opinion that it could not be effected while both brothers remained at Florence and therefore it would be better to wait until Lorenzo went to Rome, where it was reported he had an intention of going, for then their object would be more easily attained. Francesco de' Pazzi had no objection to Lorenzo being at Rome, but if he were to forego the journey, he thought that both the brothers might be slain, either at a marriage, at a play, or in a church. . . . Still no definite arrangement was made; but it was resolved that Giovanbattista and Francesco de' Pazzi should go to Rome and settle everything with the pontiff. . . .

Francesco de' Pazzi and the archbishop [of Pisa] having arrived at Florence, prevailed upon Jacopo di Poggio—a well-educated youth, but ambitious and very desirous of change—to join them, and two others, each of the name of Jacopo Salviati: one a brother, the other a kinsman of the archbishop. They also gained Bernardo Bandini and Napoleone Franzesi, two bold young men under great obligations to the family of the Pazzi. . . .

The Pope had sent Raffaello di Riario, a nephew of Count Girolamo, to the University of Pisa, to study canon law and while there had advanced him to the dignity of a cardinal. The conspirators determined to bring this cardinal to Florence as they would then be better able to conceal their design since any persons needing to be introduced into the city might easily be made to appear as a part of his company and his arrival might facilitate the completion of their enterprise. . . .

By this means it was also intended to bring together Giuliano and Lorenzo and whenever this happened, to put them both to death. They therefore invited them to meet the cardinal at their villa of Fiesole, but Giuliano—either intentionally or through some preventing cause—did not attend and this design having failed, they thought that—if asked to an entertainment at Florence—both brothers would certainly be present. With this intention they appointed Sunday, the 26th April, 1478, to give a great feast and, resolving to assassinate them at table, the conspirators met on the Saturday evening, to arrange all proceedings for the following day. In the morning, it was intimated to Francesco, that Giuliano would be absent; on this the conspirators again assembled, and finding they could no longer defer the execution of their design, since it would be impossible among so many to preserve secrecy, they determined to complete it in [Florence's] cathedral church of

Santa Reparata, where the cardinal attending, the two brothers would be present as usual. . . .

The conspirators proceeded to Santa Reparata, where the cardinal and Lorenzo had already arrived. The church was crowded and divine service commenced before Giuliano's arrival. Francesco de' Pazzi and Bernardo Bandini, who were appointed to be his murderers, went to his house and finding him, they, by earnest entreaties, prevailed on him to accompany them. . . .

The murderers being ready, each in his appointed station, which they could retain without any suspicion, on account of the vast numbers assembled in the church, the prearranged moment arrived, and Bernardo Bandini, with a short dagger provided for the purpose, struck Giuliano in the breast, who, after a few steps, fell to the earth. Francesco de' Pazzi threw himself upon the body and covered him with wounds, while—as if blinded by rage—he inflicted a deep incision upon his own leg. Antonio and Stefano the priest attacked Lorenzo, and after dealing many blows, achieved only a slight incision in the throat; for either their want of resolution, the activity of Lorenzo, who, finding himself attacked, used his arms in his own defense, or the assistance of those by whom he was surrounded, rendered all attempts futile. They fled and concealed themselves, but being subsequently discovered, were put to death in the most ignominious manner, and their bodies dragged about the city. Lorenzo, with the friends he had about him, took refuge in the sacristy of the church. Bernardo Bandini, after Giuliano's death, also slew Francesco Nori, a most intimate friend of the Medici, either from some previous hatred or for having endeavored to render assistance to Giuliano and—not content with these murders—he ran in pursuit of Lorenzo, intending by his own impetus to make up for the weakness and inefficiency of the others, but finding he had taken refuge in the vestry, he was prevented. . . .

Francesco de' Pazzi and Bernardo Bandini, perceiving Lorenzo's escape and the principal agent in the enterprise seriously wounded, became immediately conscious of the imminent peril of their position. Bernardo, using the same energy in his own behalf that had served him against the Medici, finding all lost, saved himself by flight. Francesco, wounded as he was, got to his house, and endeavored to get on horseback, for it had been arranged they should ride through the city and call the people to arms and liberty, but he found himself unable from the nature of his wound and the effusion of blood. He then took off his clothes, and, throwing himself naked upon his bed, begged Jacopo de' Pazzi to perform the part for which he was himself incapacitated. . . .

In the meantime, the whole city was roused to arms, and Lorenzo de' Medici, accompanied by a numerous escort, returned to his house. The city hall [Palazzo Vecchio] was recovered from its assailants, all of whom were either slain or made prisoners. . . .

The people took possession of their houses, and Francesco, naked as they found him, was led to the Palazzo Vecchio and hanged [from the bell tower] beside the archbishop and the rest.

Source: Machiavelli, Niccolò. *History of Florence and of the Affairs of Italy: From the Earliest Times to the Death of Lorenzo the Magnificent*. London: George Bell & Sons, 1901, pp. 354–62.

RECREATION AND SOCIAL CUSTOMS

The Festival of St. John in Florence: Gregorio (Goro) Dati. *History of Florence* (c. 1410)

Gregorio (Goro) Dati (1362–1435) was a successful Florentine silk merchant, memoir writer, and author of a History of Florence (1380–1406), from which the following is taken. His writings—all in Italian—display the interests and enthusiasms of an active member of the Florentine mercantile elite, who combined pragmatism with civic patriotism and its idealism. St. John (San Giovanni) had long been patron and protector of the community, making his festival every June 24 a civic as well as religious holiday. A palio is a cloth banner; the palio is the valuable prize rewarded to the winner of the horse race with the same name.

When springtime comes . . . every Florentine begins to think of making a fine day of the feast of St. John, which falls in mid-summer, and everyone in good time supplies himself with garments, decorations, and jewels. Whoever is planning a wedding banquet . . . postpones it until then in order to honor the feast day. Two months ahead, making the palio begins, and of the servants' garments, the pennants and trumpets, as well as the palii that the dependent territories bring as tribute, and the candles and other things that are to be offered. [And work is begun on] inviting people, ensuring supplies for banquets, getting horses to come from everywhere to run the palio race, and all the city is busy preparing for the feast day. . . . Once the eve of St. John's day arrives, early in the morning all the guilds make a display, on the outside walls of their workshops, of all their rich things, ornaments, and jewels. As many cloths of gold and silk are displayed as would adorn ten kingdoms, and as many gold and silver pieces of jewelry, rich hangings, painted panels, and marvelous carvings, and things pertaining to feats of arms. Then at about the hour of terce (9:00 AM), a solemn procession is made by all the clerics, priests, monks, and friars . . . with so many relics of saints, that it is a thing of immeasurable devotion. . . . With them are many companies [confraternities] of secular men . . . dressed as angels, sounding musical instruments of many sorts,

singing marvelously, and enacting the lives of those saints that each company honors. . . . Then in the afternoon, at around the hour of vespers (6 PM), when the heat has fallen somewhat, all the citizens assemble behind the banner [*gonfalone*] of their local district. There are sixteen of these, and they march one behind the other, with the citizens two by two, the worthiest and eldest at the front and so on down to the boys at the back. They march to the church of San Giovanni, each to make his offering of a one-pound wax candle. . . . The streets they pass along are all decorated, the walls and stone benches with hangings, painted wooden panels [*spallieri*], and benchcovers, covered in sendal [silk cloth]. And all the streets are full of young women and girls dressed in silk and adorned with precious jewels and pearls. And this offering lasts until sunset. Once the offering has been made, every citizen and woman returns home to make arrangements for the following morning.

On the morning of St. John, whoever goes to see the Piazza dei Signori will see something magnificent, marvelous, and “triumphal.” . . . Around the piazza are 100 towers, which seem to be of gold; some of them borne on carts, some by men. . . . These are made of wood, paper, and wax, and decorated with gold and colors and drawn figures; they are empty inside so that men can stand inside them, and continuously make the figures go round and round. The figures are of men on horseback jousting, or of foot soldiers running with lances and shields, or young girls round-dancing. . . . Around the rostrum of the Palazzo [dei Signori] there are 100 palii or more, fixed on their poles with iron rings. The first are those of the principle cities who pay tribute to the commune of Florence, such as Pisa, Arezzo, Pistoia, Volterra, Cortona . . . and of some of the lords of Poppi and Piombino who are allies of the commune. They are made of double-velvet, some of squirrel-fur and some of silk cloth; the others are all velvet or other fabric. . . .

After dinner, when people have had some rest . . . all the women and girls go and stand along the course of the palio race: the course passes straight through the middle of the city, where there are a good many homes and fine houses of the good citizens, more than in any other district. And from one end of the city to the other, along this route, filled with flowers, are all the women, and all the jewels and rich decorations of the city. And there are always foreign lords and knights who come from neighboring cities to see the beauty and magnificence of the feast day. . . . The horses are ready for the start and, at three tolls of the big bell of the Palazzo dei Signori, they begin to race. And at the top of the tower are boys whose support for this or that horse can be seen from their gestures. The most superior Barbary horses in the world come from all over Italy. And the one that first reaches the palio, wins it, and is borne on a triumphal four-wheeled cart, decorated with four carved lions that seem alive, one on each corner, and drawn by two horses. . . ; the palio is very large and rich, of fine scarlet velvet, in two parts joined by gold trimming

as wide as a man's palm, lined with squirrel belly and edged with ermine, fringed with silk and gold, and it costs in total 300 florins or more.

Source: Dean, Trevor. *The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000, pp. 72–75. Reprinted by permission of Manchester University Press.

THE WEDDING OF LORENZO IL MAGNIFICO: LETTER OF PIERO DI COSIMO DE' MEDICI TO FILIPPO STROZZI THE ELDER (1469)

Piero di Cosimo de' Medici wrote this letter to Filippo Strozzi the Elder, an affluent Florentine banker and statesman who had missed the nuptials of Piero's son, Lorenzo. The ceremony married Lorenzo de' Medici—Il Magnifico—and Roman noblewoman Clarice Orsini on June 4, 1469. The letter details an incredibly vast array of food, which Piero di Cosimo de' Medici dismisses as modest. Note the impressive and complex effort needed to serve such a large feast as well as the importance of these feasts to the Italian elite class, who would lavishly spend on appearance in preparation. After Piero's death later that same year, Lorenzo assumed leadership of Florence.

An Account of the Wedding of Lorenzo di Piero di Cosimo, according to what was told me by Cosimo Bartoli, one of the principal Directors of the Festival, particularly with regards to Sweetmeats and Sugar-plums, and also what I saw myself.

On Friday, which was the 2nd of June, the presents offered by the countryside began to arrive from the principal towns, Pisa, Arezzo, and other communes, villas, and castles. All presented eatables, such as calves, fowls, geese, wine, sweetmeats, wax, and fish. I send you the exact list as far as I could get it. The presentations of these went on all day on Saturday with great noise and rejoicings; and on that day pieces of veal of from 10 to 20 lbs. in weight were given to 800 citizens. You and I were among the number.

[Note from Bartoli]

Calves, 150.

More than 2000 couples of capons, geese, and fowls.

Sea fish and trout in large quantities. I do not yet know how many.

Sweet things in abundance: sugar-plums as big as arbutus berries, almonds, pine nuts, sweetmeats, also the imitations thereof from there [Naples?].

The number I do not yet know. Wax I know not how much.

Many hundreds of flasks of wine and several casks of foreign wines, such as Malvasia and the like, and of native red wine.

Of grain, oats, and the like, I do not think there was much. . . .

The order of the banquets, of which there were five, was the same on the mornings of Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. . . .

The order observed in serving was remarkable. For all the dishes were brought in at the door opening into the street, preceded, as is the custom, by trumpets. The bearers turned to the right in the loggia and returned to the foot of the staircase up which some went, while others passed into the hall to the young men, and others to the maidens in the garden, and others again remained under the loggias where were those who had been invited, so that all were served at the same time. The same order was observed in taking away the dishes, and each man knew his service and his place and did nothing else. The dishes were according to the tables, and among those who brought them in were the servers, each of whom directed his own men to the proper table. There were fifty large dishes, the contents of each of which were sufficient to fill two platters, and one trencher [large plate] was placed between every two guests, a carver being in attendance.

The banquets were prepared for a marriage rather than for a magnificent feast, and I think this was done as an example to others not to exceed the modesty and simplicity suitable to marriages, so there was never more than one roast. In the morning, a small dish, then some boiled meat, then a roast, after that wafers, marzipan and sugared almonds and pine nuts, then jars of preserved pine nuts and sweetmeats. In the evening, jelly, a roast, fritters, wafers, almonds, and jars of sweetmeats. On Tuesday morning, instead of the roast, were sweet pies of succulent vegetables on platters; the wines were excellent Malvasia, Trebbiano, and red wine. Of silver plate, there was little. . . .

The feasting began in the morning a little before dinner-time, then everyone went away to repose. At about the twentieth hour (4 o'clock), they returned and danced until supper-time on the stage outside, which was decorated with tapestries, benches, and forms, and covered with large curtains of purple, green, and white cloth, embroidered with the arms of the Medici and the Orsini. Every time a group came on to the stage to dance, they took refreshments once or twice, according to the time. First came the trumpeters, then a great silver basin, then many smaller ones full of glasses, then small silver jars full of water, then many flasks of Trebbiano and then twenty-three silver bowls full of preserved pine nuts and sweet conserves. To all was given in abundance and all the dishes were emptied. The same happened with the flasks of wine. The account has not been made, but from five to [blank] thousand pounds of sweetmeats and sugar-plums were consumed. . . .

One day, it rained: on the Monday, just when the feast was at its highest. It seemed as though done on purpose. It enveloped everything and wet the beautiful dresses, for the rain was so sudden and so heavy that many could not get under shelter soon enough. But the youths and the women had not put on the finest clothes which they had reserved for that day, the most important of the feast, so that to many it seemed their money had been spent in vain, not being able to wear

them. However, on Tuesday morning when the bride went to hear Mass in San Lorenzo, accompanied by all the youths and maidens who had attended her at the wedding, all were in their finest clothes.

Source: Lives of the Early Medici as Told in Their Correspondence. Translated by Janet Ross. Boston: Gorham Press, 1911, pp. 128–34.

RELIGION AND BELIEFS

A Fifteenth-Century Venetian Merchant's Understanding of the Mass: *Zibaldone da Canal*, a Venetian Merchant's Manual (1422)

The Zibaldone da Canal is a Venetian merchant's manual filled with useful information in Latin and Italian for one dealing in long-distance trade. Scattered throughout are stories, poems and epigrams, and advice, including the following passage on the value of regularly attending Mass. It reflects the common practice of being at the service but not receiving communion. As in much of the rest of the work, this section seems to have been copied from another source, perhaps a grammar school-level religion book. This might explain the combination of supposed doctrine and etiquette and the sometimes shaky language.

Note. This book belongs to lord Niccolò da Canal, honorable citizen of Venice, 1422 month of August, born to the distinguished and noble Lord Bartolomeo.

Here below are the virtues that the Christian soul acquires with many spiritual and corporal blessings hearing the holy Mass completed and begun, standing firm with as much devotion as one can have, and to put one's mind completely to all the actions and gestures that the priest uses, considering that they all stand in some way for the different sufferings borne by our Lord Jesus Christ for us ungrateful Christians.

Saint Augustine says that every step taken in going to hear Mass and in returning is greatly repaid by the Omnipotent God; then in that day one cannot lose the light [sight] of one's eyes, nor die a sudden death. And if, however, it should occur, the Church promises that it is as if one had taken communion, and will not be touched by the pains of hell. Next, the Lord will, for that day, provide you with what you need to live. Next, for as long as the Mass lasts one does not age or weaken, because as Adam, eating of the tree of life did not age nor weaken, and the sons of Israel, eating manna in the desert, [how] much better for the Christians to see the sacrament of the altar where beneath those symbols [of bread and wine] is the body of Christ. Next, one is pardoned for vain and ignorant

oaths. St. Bernard says that among all the virtues of the Christian the first is to hear Mass every day, more potent and useful than to go around the world distributing one's goods to the poor for the love of God. St. Jerome says that while one is saying the Mass, the soul for whom one prays, or who may be recommended to him, feels no pain of purgatory during that time. St. Ambrose says that the meal that one eats on the day that one has heard the Mass does more for one's nature than if one had not heard it; and one cannot produce any profanation in that day for having heard Mass as it ought to be heard by good Christians, standing devotedly and still and not as in [illegible . . .] being in the sight of the Omnipotent God accompanied by the whole heavenly multitude. St. Paul says that a prayer from the head, which is Christ in the Mass and we are his members, is worth more than all the Christians together. St. Luke says that if a great sinner hears the Mass and is truly contrite, and should then die, he will be regarded by the Church as Catholic, the same as if he had received the sacraments. St. Mark says that by virtue of the Mass one is pardoned the vain thoughts of that day. St. Gregory says that for every Mass that one says, he converts a sinner to the Lord, and lets evil go, and walks by the way that leads to eternal life, persevering, and not returning to mortal sins hidden under many covers, Satan's and the world's and our own, because there is a great Lord who rules with virtue even himself, not giving a bad example to neighbors, nor giving reason to others that offend God under his motives. And a soul is drawn from purgatory, and the just soul is not separated from the way of the Lord. . . .

St. John Chrysostom says that the saying of the Mass is worth as much as the death of Christ on the cross, because in the Mass the memory of the Passion of Christ is made real, the which is hidden under the species of bread and of wine to be transmuted into the substance of the body of Christ. Next, all the saints hold that a Mass heard in our life[time] is worth as much, and is as useful to our soul, as a thousand Masses that might be said for the soul after our death. And say confession with a priest of those who know it, and say it with as much contrition as you can. And then say nothing when he reads [aloud during the Mass], because you sin; but when he does not read loudly you can say your prayers, and say them quietly so you will not bother the priest, nor the people at Mass who are often outraged by some who speak loudly. And when the priest has taken communion, put yourself in a good [frame of] mind, and accept guilt for all of your sins, because spiritually you will be like one who has taken communion. And note that God is the most excellent spirit and high wisdom, and the more we live with wisdom, the nearer we approach to the likeness of God, to the [illegible . . .] we could have been made. But, when we live more distant from [illegible . . .] divine wisdom we approach the [foolish?] and we become foolish, and are deprived of such beauty . . . many souls are already endangered and damned.

Source: Dotson, John E., trans. *Merchant Culture in Fourteenth Century Venice: The Zibaldone da Canal*. Binghampton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1994, pp. 171–73. Reprinted with permission.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE INQUISITION AGAINST A WITCH: COSTANZA’S “DIABOLICAL WORKS” AS RECOUNTED BEFORE THE INQUISITION IN MODENA (1518)

Many of the denunciations made against local women to Inquisition officials involved not heresy but collusion with devils or demons. According to documents, love and/or sex, whether for the conjuror or a client, were often the desired outcomes. In the following case, from the city of Modena, Filippo Barbetta was the object of Costanza’s efforts. Local Inquisition authorities held Costanza and the two Marias gave their testimony. The records—written in the Modenese dialect—show that the officials consulted on the matter but apparently did nothing further, since they released her.

Deposition of Maria Betocchia, 28 December 1518

Questioned how does she know that [Costanza] has a bad reputation and [is known to be] a sorceress, she answered that with her own eyes saw her buying wood in the name of the great devil, and putting a horseshoe from a horse’s left fore hoof in the name of the great devil on that wood set on fire, and hitting an odd number of times the aforementioned horseshoe with a hammer in the name of the great devil, and while she hit the hammer she would say, “I do not hammer and hit you, horseshoe, rather I hit the heart, mind, imagination, feelings and vigor of Barbetta.” Then she used to take that horseshoe and to cool it for a little while in a chamber pot with urine, saying these words, “I do not sizzle you, horseshoe, but rather the mind, heart, vigor and feelings of Barbetta until he comes to this house to do as I please.” Then she used to hit the horseshoe again on the fire, and would repeat all these things until that man was forced to come to her house. And when he was ill he was obliged to send someone else in his place.

Questioned how does she know that the man was forced to go or to send someone else in his place, she answered that she had seen all this more than ten times with her own eyes, and the said Barbetta forced to come in the aforementioned way. She added that when Barbetta would come, he looked half dead and extremely tormented and afflicted.

Questioned whether the aforesaid Costanza seemed to put great trust in those diabolical works of hers and in the same devil she conjured, she answered to

have heard from the same Costanza that she believed in these things in a most stunning way. . . .

Questioned whether she knows anything else about the aforesaid Costanza concerning such conjurings of demons, she answered that innumerable times, perhaps as many as one hundred times, she saw the same Costanza putting her five fingers in five links of the chain in the fireplace, and invoking five demons, saying, “Five fingers I put to the wall, O five devils, I conjure you.” Costanza called the demons by their individual names, and while conjuring them she used to say many other words, often inserting the names of the most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, without which, as the said witness heard from the same Costanza, she could not have done anything. With that conjuration Costanza also ordered those demons to extract five drops of blood from Barbetta’s heart, three of which they had to bring to the same Costanza, while they could keep the other two as reward.

Deposition of Maria, Daughter of Pellegrino Burdini, 7 January 1518/19

. . . the said witness [Maria] heard from Laura Betocchia that the said Costanza could teach her how to be loved by a certain lover of hers. Therefore, upon request of the same Maria, the aforesaid Costanza taught the said witness to steal a pin in the name of Lucifer, prince of the demons, saying these words, “I do not steal a pin or other things, rather I steal the heart, feelings, vigor and will,” naming the man to whom this was meant to be done. Then she added, “May this prevent him from loving, having sex with, and even looking at, all other women, until he comes to do as I, such-and-such,” naming the person casting the spell, “please and desire.” Then [Costanza taught her] to stick the pin in the hem of a dress that she normally wore, saying these words: “I do not stick a pin in woolcloth, nor in linen cloth, nor in sackcloth, nor in felt nor in other things, rather it is an arrow that I strike at such-and-such,” naming the person to whom all this was done. And she concluded in this way: “May this deprive him of heart, feelings, vigor and will [and prevent him from] loving, having sex with, and even looking at, all other women, in the name of Lucifer, greatest devil and master of Hell.”

[Maria] testified that Costanza would then teach her to measure the hem of the said dress for [*sic*] five times and [she would find it to be] five spans; then she had to hold one end of the said dress and to measure it again, and she would find it now to be a little longer than four spans or around; and this was a sign that she had achieved her aim through the aforementioned superstitions.

Source: Duni, Matteo. *Under the Devil’s Spell: Witches, Sorcerers, and the Inquisition in Renaissance Italy*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2007, pp. 95–97. Reprinted by permission of Syracuse University Press.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

A Metallurgist on Alchemy: Vannoccio Biringuccio.
Pirotechnia (1540)

Vannoccio Biringuccio (1480–c. 1539) worked in Ferrara and Germany and in 1538 came to head the papal foundry, specializing in producing bells and cannon. His Pirotechnia, the first printed full treatment of metallurgy, was produced in Venice in 1540 and contains his comments on alchemy. Here he distinguishes between the proper and fruitful prescientific experimentation with metals and exploration of their properties, practices rather close to modern chemistry, and the semi-mystical, and in his eyes fraudulent, quests for the philosopher's stone and the means of changing base metals into gold. Clearly, he believed in alchemical processes but not in the products alchemists had produced to date.

Since I have mentioned the art of alchemy in many parts of this treatise of mine, especially when I came to the description of the practice of various operations, I do not here intend to argue as to whether it may be called true or not. But in case it is true, inasmuch as it is seen in operation to be a result dependent on the actions and qualities of fires; I should not pass it in silence without speaking at all of this art here, nor would I wish to do so, especially since I think you do not really know what it is except in so far as common report is heard everywhere to the effect that whoever carries it to completion makes silver and gold with it. Because of this belief, many seek it with much time, labor and expense, as I know you have often heard related, if not elsewhere, by me on the chapter on gold that I have written in this volume.

Now, do not think that I want to teach you this art here, for I am one of those who do not know it. Therefore I shall tell you here, so that you may know more, only that those workers who so eagerly follow after and seek it proceed by just two pathways. One is that which takes its enlightenment from the words of the wise philosophers, by means of which they think to attain it. This they call the just, holy, and good way, and they say that in this they are but imitators and assistants of Nature, indeed, manipulators and true physicians of mineral bodies, purging them of superfluities and assisting them by augmenting their powers and freeing them from their defects. In this way they sometimes proceed to corrupt these bodies in order to be able to separate the elements they contain so as to reduce them, if possible, to their primary materials, as they call them, or sometimes they convert them into new substances by means of this art or by adding another spirit [substance] different from the first one. Thus they seek in this way to bring these materials to

a certain point of corruption or to a separation of elements, or to remove or add spirits to things, or to make coarse materials subtle and sometimes to make subtle materials coarse. Therefore as you can understand, these persons, with bridle broken, run a circular track night and day, without ever having rest; and surely I do not know whether anyone has arrived at the desired goal.

Nevertheless, even though the goal of this art were emptiness, as many believe, it is indeed so ingenious a thing and one so delightful to students of natural things that they cannot forego the expenditure of all possible time, labor, or expense. Besides the sweetness offered by the hope of one day possessing the rich goal that this art promises so liberally, it is surely a fine occupation, since in addition to being very useful to human need and convenience, it gives birth every day to new and splendid effects such as the extraction of medicinal substances, colors, and perfumes, and an infinite number of compositions of things. It is known that many arts have issued solely from it; indeed, without it or its means it would have been impossible for them ever to have been discovered by man except through divine revelation.

Thus, in short, it can be said in conclusion that this art is the origin and foundation of many other arts, wherefore it should be held in reverence and practiced. But he who practices it must be ignorant neither of cause nor of natural effects, and not too poor to afford the expense. Neither should he do it from avarice, but only in order to enjoy the fine fruits of its effects and the knowledge of them, and that pleasing novelty which it shows to the experimenter in operation.

The other path is very different from this one, yet seems to have been born from it. Though it is sister or illegitimate daughter to it, it is called sophistic, violent and unnatural. Usually only criminals and practicers of fraud exercise it. It is an art founded only on appearance and show, one that corrupts the substances of metallic bodies with various poisonous mixtures and transforms them so greatly that it easily makes them appear at first sight to be what they are not. It often has the power of deceiving the judgment as well as the eye so that it appears beautiful to the one who has performed it, but later it is so much the more displeasing both to him and to all others when they see that its vestments fall and, when it stands revealed, they understand that it contains only vice, fraud, loss, fear, and shameful infamy. Thus, since its result is mean and poor, this art is followed only by persons of a like nature. With all this, it is not that it lacks a certain kind of philosophic and ingenious technique in regard to proportioning the materials by weight and measure, so that they may correspond to the effects that that it is desired to attain. Nevertheless, because its goal is ultimately harmful, not only to others but also to him who practices it, its whole nature is, in a word, of evil intent, whence it comes to be infamous and blameworthy; likewise because of its wretched goal it is as foul as the first art is honorable and praiseworthy. Because the multitude would abhor and despise them, good and clever men cannot practice it. . . .

In my opinion, these [alchemical] effects produce naught but resemblances, such as that of brass to gold, glass to crystal, and enamel to gems.

Source: Biringuccio, Vannoccio. Translated and edited by Cyril Stanley Smith and Martha Teach Gnudi. *Pirotechnia*, pp. 336–38. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1942. (c) 1966 Massachusetts Institute of Technology, by permission of The MIT Press.

THE POPES' BOOK COLLECTION: MICHEL DU MONTAIGNE. VISIT TO THE PAPAL LIBRARY. *TRAVEL JOURNAL* (1581)

In the early years of Roman humanism Popes Nicholas V and Sixtus IV established what would become the great Vatican Library. Subsequent pontiffs added to its collection of classical and medieval manuscripts as well as modern manuscript and printed editions of classical works of all types. In the fall of 1580, the famous French classicist and essayist Michel du Montaigne traveled south to visit Rome and perhaps heal his bladder stone. In his Travel Journal he recorded much of what he encountered in late Renaissance Italy, not least the great papal library. His "our" refers to Catholics, as many readers would be French Calvinists.

On March 6th I went to see the Vatican Library, which is in five or six large rooms all in a row. There are a large number of books attached [by chains] onto several rows of desks; there are also some in coffer, which were all opened to me; lots of books written by hand, and especially a Seneca and the *Moral Essays* of Plutarch. Among the remarkable things I saw there were a statue of the good Aristides with a handsome bald head, a thick beard, a big forehead, a look full of gentleness, and majesty; his name is written on the very ancient pedestal; a book from China, in strange characters, the leaves made of some material much softer and more pellucid than our paper; and because this cannot endure the stain of ink, the writing is only on one side of the sheet, and the sheets are all double and folded at the outside edges, by which they hold together. They think it is the membrane of some tree. I also saw a bit of the ancient papyrus, on which there were unknown characters: it is the bark of a tree. I saw the breviary of [6th-century Pope] St. Gregory, written by hand; it bears no evidence of the year, but they hold that it has come down from him from hand to hand. It is a missal [Mass-book] like ours, and was brought to the last Council of Trent to serve as a testimony of our ceremonies. I saw a book by St. Thomas Aquinas in which there are corrections in the hand of the author himself, who wrote badly, a small lettering worse than mine. Also, a Bible printed on parchment, one of those that [Antwerp printer] Plantin has just done in four languages, which [Spain's] King Philip sent to the present Pope, as

is stated in the inscription on the binding; the original of the book that the King of England (Henry VIII) composed against Luther, which he sent about fifty years ago to Pope Leo X, inscribed with his own hand, with this most elegant Latin distych, also in his own hand:

To Leo Ten, Henry, king of the English, sends
This work, a pledge of loyalty between two friends.

I read the prefaces, the one to the pope. The other to the reader: he excuses himself because of his military occupations and lack of ability; for scholastic Latin, it is good.

I saw the library without any difficulty; anyone can see it thus, and can make whatever extracts he wants; and it is open almost every morning. I was guided all through it and invited by a gentleman to use it whenever I wanted. Our ambassador was leaving Rome at that time without having seen it, and complained that they wanted him to pay court to Cardinal Sirleto, master of this library, for this permission: and, he said, he had never been able to see that handwritten Seneca, as he hugely desired to do. Fortune brought me to it, since on this testimony of his I considered the thing hopeless. All things are easy in this way from certain angles, and inaccessible from others. Opportunity and opportuneness have their privileges, and often offer to the common people what they refuse to kings. Curiosity often gets in its own way, as also do greatness and power.

I also saw there a handwritten Vergil in extremely large lettering and those long, narrow characters that we see here in the inscriptions of the time of the [Roman] emperors, as for example around the time of Constantine, which have a sort of Gothic fashion and have lost that square proportion that is in the old Latin writings. This Vergil confirmed me in what I have always judged, that the first four lines that they put in the *Aeneid* are borrowed: this book does not have them. There is an Acts of the Apostles written in very beautiful gold Greek lettering, as fresh and recent as if it were of today. This lettering is massive and has a solid body raised on the paper, so that if you pass your hand over it you feel the thickness. I think we have lost the use of this kind of writing.

Source: Montaigne's Travel Journal. Translated by Donald M. Frame. San Francisco, CA: North Point Press, 1983, pp. 85–87. Reprinted by permission of North Point Press, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, LLC.

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Appendix: Popes and European Rulers (1350–1600)

Popes (1350–1600) (Italians with Family Names)

Clement VI (French, Avignon; 1342–1352)
Innocent VI (French, Avignon; 1352–1362)
Blessed Urban V (French, Avignon; 1362–1370)
Gregory XI (French, Avignon; 1370–1378)
Urban VI (Italian/Prignano; 1378–1389)
Boniface IX (Italian/Tomacelli; 1389–1404)
Innocent VII (Italian/Migliorati; 1404–1406)
Gregory XII (Italian/Correr; 1406–1415; 2-year interregnum followed)
Martin V (Italian/Colonna; 1417–1431)
Eugene IV (Italian/Condulmaro; 1431–1447)
Nicholas V (Italian/Parentucelli; 1447–1455)
Callistus III (Spanish; 1455–1458)
Pius II (Italian/Piccolomini; 1458–1464)
Paul II (Italian/Barbo; 1464–1471)
Sixtus IV (Italian/Della Rovere; 1471–1484)
Innocent VIII (Italian/Cibo; 1484–1492)
Alexander VI (Spanish; 1492–1503)
Pius III (Italian/Piccolomini; 1503)
Julius II (Italian/Delle Rovere; 1503–1513)
Leo X (Italian/Medici; 1513–1521)
Adrian VI (Dutch; 1522–1523)
Clement VII (Italian/Medici; 1523–1534)
Paul III (Italian/Farnese; 1534–1549)
Julius III (Italian/Del Monte; 1550–1555)
Marcellus II (Italian/Cervini; 1555)
Paul IV (Italian/Carafa; 1555–1559)
Pius IV (Italian/Medici of Milan; 1559–1565)

St. Pius V (Italian/Ghislieri; 1566–1572)
Gregory XIII (Italian/Boncompagni; 1572–1585)
Sixtus V (Italian/Montalto; 1585–1590)
Urban VII (Italian/Castagna; 1590)
Gregory XIV (Italian/Sfrondrati; 1590–1591)
Innocent IX (Italian/Facchinetti; 1591)
Clement VIII (Italian/Aldobrandini; 1592–1605)

Kings of France (1350–1600)

House of Valois

John II (1350–1364)
Charles V (1364–1380)
Charles VI (1380–1422)
Charles VII (1422–1461)
Louis XI (1461–1483)
Charles VIII (1483–1498)
Louis XII (1498–1515)
Francis I (1515–1547)
Henry II (1547–1559)
Francis II (1559–1560)
Catherine de Medici (regent, 1560–1563)
Charles IX (1560–1574)
Henry III (1574–1589)

House of Bourbon

Henry IV (1589–1610)

Holy Roman Emperors (1350–1600; dated from election King of the Romans)

Charles IV of Luxemburg (1346–1378)
Wenzel of Luxemburg (1376–1400)
Ruprecht III Wittelsbach of Palatinate (king, 1400–1410)
Sigismund of Luxemburg (1410–1437)

House of Habsburg

Frederick III (1440–1493)
Maximilian I (1493–1519)
Charles V (1519–1556)

Ferdinand I (1556–1564)
 Maximilian II (1564–1576)
 Rudolf II (1576–1612)

Aragonese and Spanish Monarchs 1350–1600

Aragon

Peter IV (1336–1387)
 John I (1387–1396)
 Martin I (1396–1410)
 Ferdinand (1412–1416)
 Alfonso V (1416–1458)
 John II (1458–1479)
 Ferdinand II (1479–1516) (joint monarch of Spain with his wife Isabella of Castile [1479–1504])

Spain (Habsburgs)

Charles (Carlos) I (1516–1556; Emperor Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire from 1519)
 Philip II (1556–1598)
 Philip III (1598–1621)

Kings of Naples (1350–1600)

Angevins

Joan I (1343–1382)
 Charles III (1382–1386)
 Ladislao (1386–1414)
 Joan II (1414–1435)
 René (1435–1442)

Aragonese

Alfonso the Magnanimous (1442–1458)
 Ferdinand (1458–1494)
 Alfonso II (1494–1495)
 Ferdinand II (1495–1496)
 Frederigo (1496–1501)
 King Ferdinand of Aragon (1501–1516)

Spanish

King Charles (Carlos) I of Spain/Emperor Charles V (1516–1556)

King Philip II of Spain (1556–1598)

King Philip III of Spain (1598–1621)

Rulers of Milan (1350–1600)

Visconti Family

Archbishop Giovanni (1349–1354)

Bernabò (1354–1385)

Galeazzo II (1354–1378)

Matteo II (1354–1355)

Gian Galeazzo I (1385–1395; Duke of Milan, 1395–1402)

Gian Maria (duke, 1402–1412)

Filippo I Maria (duke, 1412–1447)

Ambrosian Republic (1447–1450)

Sforza Family and After

Francesco I (1450–1466)

Galeazzo Maria III (1466–1476)

Gian Galeazzo II (1476–1494)

Ludovico (1494–1499)

[King Louis XII of France (1499–1500)]

Ludovico (restored, 1500)

[King Louis XII (restored, 1500–1512)]

Massimiliano Sforza (1512–1515)

[King Francis I of France (1515–1521)]

Francesco II Sforza (1521–1524)

[King Francis I (restored, 1524–1525)]

Francesco II Sforza (restored, 1525–1535)

[Emperor Charles V Habsburg for his son Philip (1535–1540)]

[King Philip II of Spain (1540–1598)]

[King Philip III of Spain (1598–1621)]

Doges of Venice (1350–1600)

Andrea Dandolo (1342–1354)

Marino Falier (1354–1355)

Giovanni Gradenigo (1355–1356)

Giovanni Dolfín (1356–1361)

Lorenzo Celsi (1361–1365)
 Marco Cornaro (1365–1367)
 Andrea Contarini (1367–1382)
 Michele Morosini (1382)
 Antonio Venier (1382–1400)
 Michele Steno (1400–1413)
 Tommaso Mocenigo (1413–1423)
 Francesco Foscari (1423–1457)
 Pasquale Malipiero (1457–1462)
 Cristoforo Moro (1462–1471)
 Nicolo Tron (1471–1473)
 Nicolo Marcello (1473–1474)
 Pietro Mocenigo (1474–1476)
 Andrea Vendramin (1476–1478)
 Giovanni Mocenigo (1478–1485)
 Marco Barbarigo (1485–1486)
 Agostino Barbarigo (1486–1501)
 Leonardo Loredan (1501–1521)
 Antonio Grimani (1521–1523)
 Andrea Gritti (1523–1538)
 Pietro Lando (1538–1545)
 Francesco Donato (1545–1553)
 Marcantonio Trivisan (1553–1554)
 Francesco Venier (1554–1556)
 Lorenzo Priuli (1556–1559)
 Giorolamo Priuli (1559–1567)
 Pietro Loredan (1567–1570)
 Alvise I Mocenigo (1570–1577)
 Sebastiano Venier (1577–1578)
 Nicolò da Ponte (1578–1585)
 Pasqual Cicogna (1585–1595)
 Marino Grimani (1595–1606)

Medici Rulers of Florence (1434–1600)

Cosimo (1434–1464)
 Piero I (“The Gouty,” 1464–1469)
 Lorenzo I (“The Magnificent,” 1469–1492)
 Giuliano (1469–1478)
 Piero II (1492–1494)

Republic restored (1494–1512)

Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici (1512–1513; Pope Leo X from 1513)

Giuliano (1513–1516)

Lorenzo II (1516–1519)

Cardinal Giulio de' Medici (1519–1523)

Ippolito (1523–1527)

Alessandro (1523–1527)

Republic restored (1527–1530)

Alessandro (1530–1531; Duke of Florence, 1532–1537)

Cosimo I, Duke of Florence (1537–1569; Grand Duke of Tuscany,
1569–1574)

Francesco I, Grand Duke of Tuscany (1574–1587)

Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany (1587–1609)

Minor Urban Dynasties

Ferrara: D'Este (lords from 1264; dukes 1450–1597)

Mantua: Gonzaga (marquises from 1433; dukes from 1530)

Padua: Carrara (to 1405)

Rimini: Malatesta (1239–1528, with interruptions)

Urbino: Montefeltro (counts from 1226; dukes 1474–1502)

Verona: Della Scala (Scalagieri; 1262–1405)

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About the Author

Joseph P. Byrne, PhD in history, is professor of honors humanities at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. His dissertation for Indiana University, Bloomington, studied the Italian merchant Francesco Datini (d. 1410). He is author of *The Black Death* (2004), *Daily Life during the Black Death* (2006), *The Encyclopedia of the Black Death* (2012), and *Health and Wellness in the Renaissance and Enlightenment* (2013). He also edited the *Encyclopedia of Pestilence, Pandemics, and Plagues* (2008) and the recent series *Health and Wellness in Daily Life*, and routinely reviews scholarly works on early modern Italian cultural history for leading journals.